

Sebeos' *History*

**Translated from Classical Armenian
by Robert Bedrosian**

To the memory of my uncle Andranik Torigian

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[Translator's Preface](#)

[A Note on Pagination](#)

[Additional Resources](#)

[Prologue.](#)

[Chapter 1.](#)

Vahan's rebellion from Peroz, the seizure of authority and triumph in battle. Peroz' death, the enthronement of Kawad, and the honoring of Vahan with the *marzpanate*. Kawad's death and the enthronement of Xosrov called Anush Eruan (Anushirvan). The rebellion of Vardan and service to the Byzantines. The war and defeat of Xosrov.

[Chapter 2.](#)

Anushirvan's belief in Christ and his baptism by the bishop, and his death; the enthronement of Ormizd; Vahram's striking the troops of the T'etalats'ik', the war with the king of the Mazkut's and his death there; the rebellion and flight of the Vahramakan troops from Xosrov; the coming of Vahram; how Xosrov sought aid from the emperor Maurice.

[Chapter 3.](#)

Vahram's attack on Xosrov, and the two letters to Mushegh; Mushegh's loyalty to Xosrov; the great battle; the defeat of the rebels; Xosrov's lack of gratitude toward Mushegh which resulted in Mushegh's plans to kill him; the writing of an accusation to the emperor by means of the Byzantine princes; the emperor's dissatisfaction with that and the letter to [the princes] and to Xosrov; the dispatch of Byzantine troops; the summoning of Mushegh to the palace by the emperor.

[Chapter 4.](#)

The piety of queen Shirin, who was king Xosrov's Christian wife; Xosrov's *hrovartak*.

[Chapter 5.](#)

Emperor Maurice requests the body of Daniel from king Xosrov.

[Chapter 6.](#)

Maurice writes Xosrov a letter of condemnation about the princes and troops of Armenia, suggesting that he send those [princes and troops] in his section to Thrace while [Xosrov] send those in the Iranian section to the East; the flight of princes in the Byzantine section to Iran; Xosrov dispatched the Hazarakar with much treasure to the Byzantine section to attract many [princes] to his side; the princes ravish the treasure; preparation for war; the message; disunity of the princes, some of whom went to the Byzantines, others to the Iranians.

[Chapter 7.](#)

The Armenian princes in the Byzantine sector rebel; the war; the deaths of some in battle and the decapitation of two [rebels].

[Chapter 8.](#)

The emperor's order to assemble his Eastern forces and those of Armenia to cross the sea and mass in Thrace, against the enemy. The selection of Mushegh as their commander. The victory, vanquishment, seizure, and killing of Mushegh.

[Chapter 9.](#)

Emperor Maurice's order to preach the [acceptance of the] Council of Chalcedon in Armenia; the division of the patriarchal throne.

[Chapter 10.](#)

Again the emperor's command to assemble the Armenian cavalry. The troops of Sahak Mamikonean and Smbat Bagratuni are taken. Smbat returns to Armenia. The Armenian *naxarars*' plan. Smbat goes to the emperor with seven men. [Smbat] falls into arena [combat]. Smbat's bravery there. His liberation, and exile to Africa.

[Chapter 11.](#)

The summoning by king Xosrov to Asorestan of those *naxarars* whom the *Hamarakar* had left. The stationing of their troops at Spahan.

[Chapter 12.](#)

Xosrov judges his uncle Vndo. The killing of Vndo. Vstam flees to war with Xosrov, and he rules in the Parthian areas.

[Chapter 13.](#)

Death of the Armenian princes; rebellion of their troops at Spahan; the destruction of the country, seizure of the treasure and going to Vstam.

[Chapter 14.](#)

Xosrov gives Smbat Bagratuni the *marzpanate* of Vrkan [Hyrkania] and greatly exalted him. Smbat improves the land of Hyrkania through spiritual and political education.

Chapter 15.

Vstam comes to Asorestan to kill Xosrov and take the kingdom. His death from the treachery of Pariovk, king of the Kushans. The small battle in the land of Hyrkania.

Chapter 16.

Discovery of a fragment of the Cross.

Chapter 17.

Smbat fights with the enemy and triumphs. He is more honored with estimable gifts and honors than all the other *marzpons*. Smbat's son, named Varaztirots', is appointed to the office of the king's cupbearer. Construction of the church of saint Gregory. Enthronement of the *kat'oghikos*.

Chapter 18.

Smbat is summoned to the Iranian court and receives the honor of the lordship (*tanuterut'iwn*) [and of being] called Xosrov Shum. He persecutes the Kushans. The killing of Datoyean. Once more Smbat and the Armenian *naxarars* go against the Kushans and Hepthalites. A certain wrestling match. Smbat triumphs and goes to the court with great glory.

Chapter 19.

Smbat dies peacefully. The Armenian *naxarars* rebel from the Iranians and go to serve the king of the north, the Khaqan/Qaqan (Xak'an).

Chapter 20.

The rebellion of the great patrician Atat Xotxorhuni, and his death. The Iranian and Byzantine borderlands.

Chapter 21.

The killing of emperor Maurice and the reign of Phocas. The rebellion of general Erakghes (Heraclius) of Alexandria and general Nerses of Syrian Mesopotamia. Urha (Edessa) is besieged by the Byzantines and the city of Dara [is besieged] by Xosrov. Troops are mustered from [the Iranian sector of] Armenia and prince Juan Veh is made their commander. He comes to Edessa and takes T'eodos. The destruction of Dara. The Byzantines take Edessa; general Nerses is killed.

Chapter 22.

The Iranians and Byzantines battle in the plain of Shirak, and the Byzantines are defeated. Another battle takes place in Tsaghkotn. The Byzantines are defeated, T'eodos Xorxorhuni surrenders, giving the fortress to the Iranians. [T'eodos Xorxorhuni's] death.

Chapter 23.

Xosrov sends a large force to Asorestan under the command of Erhazman Xorheam, and [another army] to Armenia under Ashtat Yeztayar accompanied by the emperor Theodosius. Erhazman Xorheam subdues all of Mesopotamia. Ashtat wars with the Byzantines and subjugates the district of Karin. Shahen battles with the Byzantines and is victorious. The inhabitants of Karin are deported to Ahmatan Shahastan. Death(s) of the *Kat'oghikoi*. Shahen takes Caesarea, and Vasak Artsruni is killed.

Chapter 24.

Heraclius goes to Asorestan to fight against the Iranians. The great battle near the city of Antioch in which the Byzantines were defeated. The country of Palestine submits to the Iranians. An Iranian *ostikan* takes up residence in Jerusalem. His murder. The great destruction of Jerusalem by the Iranians by sword and fire. The holy Cross is captured.

Chapter 25.

The Construction of the Church of Hrhip'sime.

Chapter 26.

Xorheam comes to Chalcedon with a large army to take Constantinople. The emperor's exhortation and gift. [The Iranians] consent to turn back. The Iranians again return to Byzantium (*i Biwzandia*). The great naval battle and the Iranian defeat. Xosrov's *hrovartak* to Heraclius. Heraclius goes against the Iranians. The battle near Tigranakert and Heraclius' arrival at Cappadocian Caesarea in triumph and with booty. He goes against Xosrov again and battles in the plain of Nineveh where the Iranians are defeated.

Chapter 27.

The flight of Xosrov. Heraclius takes and burns Ctesiphon and returns to Atrpatakan. The killing of Xosrov and his forty sons. Kawad rules and makes peace with Byzantium and leaves the [Byzantine] borders.

Chapter 28.

Smbat's son Varaztirots' becomes a *marzpan*. The selection and deposition of *kat'oghikos* K'ristap'or and his succession by Ezr. The death of Kawad and the enthronement of his son Artashir. Heraclius writes to Xorheam requesting the holy Cross from him. The killing of Artashir and the reign of Xorheam. The killing of Xorheam, and the reign of Bbor, Xosrov's daughter. She was succeeded by a certain Xosrov, who was followed by Xosrov's daughter, Azarmiduxt. She was followed by Ormizd. Finally, the reign of Yazkert.

Chapter 29.

The return of the Cross to holy Jerusalem. The determination of the boundary between the two kings. Forced by Mzhezh Gnuni, Ezr accepts the Council of Chalcedon. The plot of Mezhezh with Rhatovm against *aspet* Varaztirots' and the latter's flight. The king swears to him and he goes to the palace and is exalted. The evil plot of At'alarikos with the princes against his father. The exposure of the plot and the plotters' deaths. The exile of Varaztirots'. The bravery of Dawit' Saharhuni, who becomes Curopalate. The deeds of T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik'.

Chapter 30.

The elimination of the Sasanian [dynasty] which held sway for 542 years. The birth of Muhammad and the entrance of the sons of Ishmael into the land of Armenia. The death of Heraclius and the reign of Constantine.

Chapter 31.

Regarding the Jews and their wicked plans.

Chapter 32.

Constantine dies as a result of his mother's plot, and Heraclius (son of Heraclius by his second wife) is enthroned. General Vaghentin (Valentinian) comes to Constantinople and enthrones Constantine's son, Kostas. The Iranians war with the Ishmaelites and are defeated. *Aspet Varaztirots'* returns from court, and dies. The Ishmaelites come to Atrpatakan, and divide into three wings They take Artsap'u fortress, campaigning against the *sep'hakan gund*.

Chapter 33.

The Lord frees the captives and destroys the Ishmaelites. Those [Arabs] who had spread out raiding at Ayrarat strike Tayk', Iberia, and Aghbania/Aghuania. The naval battle between the Ishmaelites and the Byzantines. Procopius [Prhokop] goes to Mu'awiya [Muawiya], prince of the Ishmaelites, [143] and the peace between [the Arabs] and Byzantines. The deeds of *kat'oghikos* Nerses. The dispute over faith with the Armenians. The Armenians' reply to emperor Constans.

Chapter 34.

The attack of the Hagarenes, and events in Rome.

Chapter 35.

The Ishmaelites war with the Iranians and destroy their lordship. The death of Yazkert. The Medes and the Armenians enter the service of the Hagarenes. Constans comes to Armenia. The Ishmaelites prepare [to fight] with the Byzantines. Regarding Nerses, *kat'oghikos* of Armenia.

Chapter 36.

The letter of the Ishmaelite king to the Byzantine emperor Constans. The Ishmaelite prince Mu'awiya comes to Chalcedon and is vanquished by the Lord.

Chapter 37.

The Medes rebell from the Ishmaelites.

Chapter 38.

Mushegh rebels from the Byzantines and enters the Ishmaelites' service. The battle of the Ishmaelites with the Byzantines at Naxchawan, the destruction of the Byzantines and the destruction of Armenia. Once more the Armenians quit Ishmaelite service and submit to the Byzantines. Hamazasp, lord of the Mamikonean, becomes Curopalate, as a result of which the Ishmaelites kill the hostages. Discord breaks out among the Ishmaelite army and they separate from each other. Their prince Mu'awiya conquers all of them, becomes king, and makes peace among them.

Translator's Preface

Sebeos' *History* is a seventh century document of special importance for the study of Armenia and the Middle East in the sixth-seventh centuries. It was during this period, when Iran and Byzantium were wrestling for control of the Armenian highlands, that Armenian culture became more individual, independent, and distinctively national. While Sebeos focuses his attention primarily on Armenia's lay and clerical *naxarars* (lords), he also provides extensive and valuable information on events taking place in the neighboring societies of Byzantium, Iran, and among the Arabs.

Byzantinists will find factual and anecdotal information on the reigns of emperors Maurice (582-602), Theodosius (co-emperor, 590-602), Phocas (602-610), Heraclius I (610-41) and his successors to Constans II (641-68), including their wars against Iran in the east and the Goths in the west. Iranists will find information on officials such as the *hamaharz*, *pustipan*, *marzpan*, *ostikan*, *Asparapet*, *patgospan*, and *hamarakar*; and a wealth of information on the reigns of *shahs* Peroz (459-84), Valas (484-88), Kawad I (488-96; 498-531), Xosrov I Anushirvan (531-79), Hormizd IV (579-90), Xosrov II Aparvez (590; 591-628), Kawad II Sheroe (628), Artashir (628-29), queen Boran (630-31), and Yazdigerd III (632-51). Sebeos' account of the rebellion of Vahram Choben and his description of the last days of the Sasanian dynasty have the authenticity of a contemporary. In addition, Sebeos narrates the birth and rise of Islam and provides unusual information on Jewish nationalism, the Khazars of the north Caucasus, and the Kushans on Iran's northeastern border.

Regrettably, aside from canonical and hagiographical literature and a few inscriptions, there are no other Armenian historical sources for the period of the sixth-seventh centuries. As such, Sebeos' information on Armenia and the Armenians has particular importance. His account begins where the fifth century Ghazar P'arpets'i's *History* left off—with the rebellion of Vahan Mamikonean in the 480s. Unfortunately, the account then skips the early and middle parts of the sixth century, picking up again with the rebellion of Vardan II Mamikonean (572) against Iran. Sebeos describes the separatist activities of the district of Siwnik' in eastern historical Armenia; Vahram Choben's efforts to enlist the aid of Mushegh Mamikonean, and Mushegh's role in Vahram's defeat; the alleged plan of the emperor Maurice and *shah* Xosrov to depopulate Armenia, and the rebellions this engendered. He especially concentrates on the reign of Maurice (582-602), who was perhaps of Armenian descent and had a peculiar antipathy toward the Armenians. The late sixth and early seventh centuries were a period when the Armenian *naxarars* were strong and independent and prone to switching allegiance from Byzantium to Iran, or *vice versa*. Sebeos describes the careers of several such prominent lords as Smbat Bagratuni, his son Varaztirots', T'eodos Xorxoruni and others, some of whom became important officials in the two rival empires. As a cleric, Sebeos was particularly interested in religious matters. He describes the activity of Armenian *kat' oghikoi*; Byzantine attempts to force Chalcedonianism on the Armenians; Iranian attempts to force Zoroastrianism on the Armenians; Christianity in Iran; and the spread of Islam.

The present translation, which was completed in 1979, was made from the classical Armenian edition of K. Patkanean [*Patmut'iwn Sebeosi episkoposi i Herakln* (St. Petersburg, 1879)]. Patkanean based his text on the earlier edition of T. Mihrdatian (Constantinople, 1851) and a manuscript at the Imperial Academy in St. Petersburg. Mihrdatian in turn had based his edition on an anonymous manuscript found in the library of Ejmiatsin in 1842 by bishop Yovhannes Shahxat'unian. There is extensive controversy about many aspects of the manuscript tradition. None of the full extant manuscripts of Sebeos predates the seventeenth century. Apparently, the now-lost text of Shahxat'unian bore neither an author nor a title. Shahxat'unian himself determined that the work must be the history alluded to by later medieval historians as Sebeos' history. Consequently, with no positive identification, the work was published as Bishop Sebeos' *History of Heraclius*

despite the fact that it is much more than the history of Heraclius. Apparently, Shahxat'unian and/or Mihrdatian divided the text into sections and chapters and prefaced them with summaries (which were not in the original manuscript).

Another controversy surrounds an earlier work appended to all extant manuscripts of this seventh century history, which has come to be known as the *Primary History of Armenia* [for an English translation and discussion see R. Thomson, *Moses Khorenats'i's History of the Armenians* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978) Appendix pp. 357-68; our translation of the [Primary History](#) is available elsewhere on this site]. Few Armenists today regard the *Primary History* and "Sebeos" as the work of the same author. Who Sebeos was, and if he really was the author of this history are presently unanswerable questions [see G. Bournoutian, "[Sebeos: A Historical Controversy](#)", *Armenian Review* (Summer, 1975) pp. 138-46] There is nothing particularly distinctive about Sebeos' style—the Armenian is direct and (usually) straightforward. All that is clear from the author's biases is that he was a patriotic historian, not unswervingly loyal to any one House, and a fervent defender of the independence of the Armenian Church.

In 1979, G.V. Abgaryan published a [critical edition of Sebeos](#) (Erevan, 1979), which includes the *Primary History*, and is based on numerous manuscripts and fragments. While Abgaryan's text may be more readable than Patkanean's, the editor's freedom in rearranging passages and completely renumbering the chapters makes it difficult to use as a companion to the scholarly writings on Sebeos by more than a century of prominent Armenists. Nonetheless, the Abgaryan edition has extensive annotation, some of which is referenced in the notes to the present translation. An extensive bibliography for the era of Sebeos and subsequent periods in Caucasian history is available in C. Toumanoff's article, "[Armenia and Georgia](#)," [Chapter XIV in *The Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. IV, The Byzantine Empire, part I, (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 593-637].

The transliteration used here is a modification of the Library of Congress system for online Armenian, substituting **x** for the LOC's **kh**, for the thirteenth character of the Armenian alphabet (խ). Otherwise we follow the LOC transliteration, which eliminates diacritical marks above or below a character, and substitutes single or double quotation marks to the character's right. In the LOC romanization, the seventh character of the alphabet (է) appears as **e'**, the eighth (ը) as **e''**, the twenty-eighth (ռ) as **r'**, and the thirty-eighth (օ), as **o'**.

Robert Bedrosian
(New York, 1985)

A Note on Pagination

The printed editions of these online texts show the page number at the top of the page. In the right margin the pagination of the Classical Armenian (*grabar*) text also is provided. We have made the following alterations for the online texts: the page number of the printed English editions (*Sources of the Armenian Tradition* series) appears in square brackets, in the text. For example [101] this text would be located on page 101, and [102] this text would be on page 102. The *grabar* pagination is as follows. This sentence corresponds to the information found on page 91 of the Classical Armenian text [g91] and what follows is on page 92. In other words, the Classical Armenian text delimiters [gnn] indicate **bottom** of page.

Additional Resources

Internet Archive:

[Texts and Studies of Sebeos](#)

[Sasanians/Sasanids](#)

[The 4th through 6th Centuries](#), from the *Chronicle* of Michael Rabo [Michael the Syrian].

[The 7th through mid-9th Centuries](#), from the *Chronicle* of Michael Rabo [Michael the Syrian].

[Syriac Sources](#) (various periods and topics), including historical material.

[Syriac Chronicles and Historiography](#) (various periods and topics), at syri.ac

[Trade and Trade Centres in Armenia in the Roman-Parthian and the Byzantine-Sasanid Periods](#), by Hagop Manandian.

Fordham University:

[Byzantine Sources](#) (various periods and topics), prepared by Paul Halsall.

Wikipedia:

[Sebeos](#)

[Sebeos](#), Google search of Wikipedia.

[6th Century](#)

[7th Century](#)

Encyclopaedia Iranica Online:

[Sebeos](#), by James Howard-Johnston.

[Sebeos](#), Google search of *Iranica*.

[Sasanian Dynasty](#), by A. Shapur Shahbazi.

[Articles on Armenia](#). Numerous articles by multiple authors.

[Arsacids/Parthians and Sasanian entries](#), from *Selected Topics in Ancient and Medieval Iranian History*, compiled by Robert Bedrosian.

Maps, at Internet Archive:

Most browsers permit decreasing (Ctrl and minus sign -) and increasing (Ctrl and plus sign +) image sizes.

in English:

from *The Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. IV *The Byzantine Empire part I* (Cambridge, 1966), facing page 598

[Caucasia in the 5-8th Centuries](#), Cyril Toumanoff, cartographer.

from *Armenia: A Historical Atlas* (Chicago, 2001), by Robert H. Hewsen.

[Byzantine expansion into Armenia \(387-591\)](#)

[Second Byzantine expansion into Armenia \(591-654\)](#)

[5-7th Centuries](#), maps and texts. Armenia in the 4th century, the lordly (*naxarar*) system, the organization of the Armenian Church, the first Byzantine expansion into Armenia (387-591), the wars for religious freedom, and the second Byzantine expansion (591-654).

in Russian:

[Armenia in the 5-7th Centuries](#), S. T. Eremyan, cartographer.

in Armenian:

[Marzpan Armenia and Neighboring Countries \(387-628\)](#) Eastern Section.

[Marzpan Armenia and Neighboring Countries \(387-628\)](#) Western Section and map legend (B. H. Harut'yunyan, cartographer).

[Greater Armenia according to the *Ashxarhats'oyts'*](#), a 7th-century Armenian geographical work by Anania Shirakets'i (S. T. Eremyan, cartographer).

Chronological Tables

The following modern chronological tables are attached to the pdf version as attachments.

Rulers of Armenia and of Eastern and Western Empires

Kat'oghikoi and Corresponding Secular Rulers of the Armenians

Rulers of Armenia and Iberia/Georgia

Sources for these chronologies are:

Armenian and Iberian/Georgian: C. Toumanoff, *Studies in Christian Caucasian History* (Georgetown, 1963), "Chronology of the Early Kings of Iberia", in *Traditio*, vol. 25 (1969), pp. 1-33; Toumanoff's tables in *The Cambridge Medieval History IV* (Cambridge, 1966); *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times* vol. 1 (New York, 1997). *Kat'oghikoi*: *Haykakan sovetakan hanragitaran [Armenian Soviet Encyclopedia]* (Yerevan, 1979), vol. 5, pp. 166-167.

Western Empires: *The Cambridge History of Iran* 3(1) (Cambridge, 1983); *The Cambridge Ancient History IX* (Cambridge, 1962); W. G. Hardy, *The Greek and Roman World* (Cambridge, Mass. 1960); Steven Runciman, *Byzantine Civilization* (New York, 1961).

Eastern Empires: *The Cambridge History of Iran* 3(1) (Cambridge, 1983); *The Cambridge Medieval History IV* (Cambridge, 1966); *The Cambridge History of Iran* vol. 5 (Cambridge, 1968).

Sebeos' *History*

Prologue

[1] At the time of the waning of the rule of the Arsacids in the land of Armenia [when] the rule of king Vramshapuh was done away with, there ruled over Armenia the people of the Kark'edovmayets'i principality. [The latter], with the unity of the venemous, grandee mages and all the principal *naxarars* (lords) of [the ruler's] kingdom adopted an awesome and frightful plan: to eliminate the fruits of piety (Christianity) in the land of Armenia. But nothing availed [the Iranian king in his plan], rather, he was damaged. And [Christian] piety more than ever blossomed and sparkled.

Now others have written about [all of the following events], as that very same *History* points out: regarding [2] the days of wicked [king] Yazkert's reign, how he wanted to destroy the divine orders (the clergy); how the brave *naxarars* of Armenia and the zealot of God, the *nahapet* Vardan called "Karmir" ("the Red") of the Mamikonean House with a brigade of armed comrades, their friends and troops organized and armed for war. [They] took in hand the shield of Faith and zeal for the divine Word clothed them like armor of security and truly before their very eyes you might say that they saw their halos descend to them [*end of grabar* (Classical Armenian) text page 22; henceforth shown as, for example, g22]. Thus did they scorn death, considering it better to die on the Divine Path. [The *History* alluded to above also tells] how the Iranian troops came against them with severe violence and how, when they clashed [the Vardaneank'] received martyrdom and how the blessed witnesses of Christ who had been captured by the pagans underwent martyrdom at Apr Shahr, close to the city of Niwshapuh, at a place called T'eark'uni.

But I wished to concisely write down and narrate to you [information] about all the following [events]: all the evil which transpired in Peroz' time; Vardan's rebellion against Xosrov; the rebellion of the Iranian troops from Ormizd; Ormizd's death and the enthronement of Xosrov; Maurice's death and the reign of Phocas; the taking of Egypt; [3] the destruction of Alexandria; the appeal of Heraclius to the king of the T'eatalats'ik' in the Northern parts and the sending of countless multitudes of peoples [in response to Heraclius' appeal]; the Byzantines' raiding in Atrpatakan, the loot and booty; the return via P'aytakaran; the coming of Iranian troops from the east to strike at him; the war which occurred in the land of [Caucasian] Aghbania; the emperor's turn to the city of Naxchewan and the fight at Archish; the emperor's departure thence to his own borders; the other attack on Xosrov; the warfare which occurred at Ninue; the raid upon the city of Ctesiphon (Tisbon); the return to Atrpatakan; Xosrov's death; the enthronement of Kawad; the reconciliation which occurred between the two kingdoms [Byzantium and Iran]; then the ceding of borders to the Byzantines; the return of the divine Cross to the Holy City. [Then I shall describe] the arousal of fathomless [divine] anger and the final disasters [brought on] by the marauders from the Southern parts [the Arabs]; how the armies of the Ishmaelites unexpectedly moved forth and, in a moment's time, overthrowing the might of both kings [g23], seized [territories extending] from Egypt to this side of the great Euphrates river and to the border of the Armenians [*ts' sahman Hayastaneayts'*], from the shores of the great sea in the West [the Atlantic] to the

gate/court of the Iranian kingdom, [taking] all the [4] cities of Mesopotamia of the Syrians, and Ctesiphon, Veh Artashir, Marand, Hamatan as far as the city of Gandzak, and the great Hrat which is located in the district of Atrpatakan.

Chapter 1

Vahan's rebellion from Peroz, the seizure of authority and triumph in battle. Peroz' death, the enthronement of Kawad, and the honoring of Vahan with the marzpanate. Kawad's death and the enthronement of Xosrov called Anush Eruan (Anushirvan). The rebellion of Vardan and service to the Byzantines. The war and defeat of Xosrov.

During the years of Peroz, king of Iran [A.D. 459-84], the suppression [bardzum] of all principalities, and orders and laws of Christianity and such danger of persecutions and contempt were visited upon the princes that they threw off the yoke of service. Vahan Mamikonean rebelled, persecuted the Iranians, and seized authority by force.

Then king Peroz released upon him many Hun troops, commanding that the rebels be killed with great severity and that all males be put to the sword. *Sparapet* Vahan hastened against this [army] with 30,000 select armed men. They massed in order, brigade against brigade, front against [5] front, and with all possible speed they attacked each other, to the sound of trumpets, in the plain of Geran.

The Word of God came to aid [the Armenians], stirring up the wind and pouring upon the Iranian troops a dust storm which in midday enveloped them like a dark eclipse. There was enormous destruction on both sides and it was impossible to distinguish Iranian from Armenian among the [g24] corpses. However, eventually the army of the Armenians drove back the army of Iranians, making fugitives of the remainder and pursuing them. They turned back from this with great triumph.

Vahan both collected the taxes of the land of Armenia and also [re]built the very great churches which the Iranians had ruined in the city of Vagharshapat, in Dwin, in Mzur [i Mzrays], and in many places in the land of Armenia. Building the country up, he again renewed it.

Now despite the fact that the Iranian king Peroz wanted to mass troops against Armenia again, he had no opportunity since news of [the coming of] enemies forced him to go to the Kushan area because it was from that very border that the [6] king of the Kushans himself was coming against [Peroz] with a large army.

Assembling his troops, [Peroz] went against [the Kushan king] with great haste, saying: "First I shall expel him, then, having nothing further to do, I shall go to Armenia once more and shall spare neither man nor woman from my sword."

When [Peroz] arrived, he quickly went to face the enemy in the East. An intense battle took place and [the Kushans] struck at and destroyed the multitude of Iranian troops, so much so that none was left alive to flee. King Peroz and seven of his sons died in the battle.

Then [Peroz'] son Kawad ruled the land of Iran [488-96, 498-531]. Because the strength of the multitude of his troops had been shattered, he did not want to make war with anyone; rather, he made peace on all sides

[including] reconciliation with the Armenians. He summoned Vahan to court and exalted him with great honor. He gave him the *marzpanate* of the land [of Armenia] and the lordship of the Mamikonean [House]. He promised much in service and benevolently sent [Vahan] back to his country.

After Vahan, authority was wielded by his brother Vard Patrik [who ruled] for a short time [505-509, or 510-514], and died. After him came Iranian *marzpan*s. The Armenians were [g25] unable to rebel, and remained in obedience until [the time of] the *marzpan* Suren and Vardan, lord of the Mamikoneans.

In the 41st year of the reign of Kawad's son Xosrov, Vardan rebelled with all Armenia united behind him and stopped serving the Iranian king. [They] killed the *marzpan* Suren unexpectedly in the city of Dwin, took much loot, and went in service to the Byzantines.

Prior to this rebellion the prince of the land of Siwnik', named Vahan, broke away from the Armenians. He requested of the Iranian king Xosrov that they take the *diwan* of the land of Siwnik' from Dwin to the city of P'aytakaran, and that the city be ranked in the Atrpatakan *Shahrmar*, so that the name "Armenia/Armenian" no longer be applied to them. [Xosrov] so ordered.

Now the emperor of the Byzantines made an oath with the Armenians, confirming the same oath which had existed between those two venerable kings, Trdat and Constantine, and he gave them imperial troops in aid. Taking the troops, [8] [the Armenian rebels] turned upon the city of Dwin, besieged and destroyed it and pursued the Iranian force which was there.

But suddenly great agitation came upon them, for it was learned that the Iranians had set fire to and burned down the church of saint Gregory which had been built near the city, and which the Iranians had turned into a granary.

Then Mihrewandak the Mihran came against them with 20,000 troops and numerous elephants. There was a big battle in the Xaghamaxik' plain. [The Armenians] struck unbelievable blows at the Iranian forces, dulling their swords, and they captured all the elephants. The Mihran escaped with a few men, and they went to their country.

This is that very Vardan against whom the Iranian king himself, called Xosrov Anushirvan, came with a multitude [9] of armed men and many elephants. Travelling through the [g26] district of Artaz, [Xosrov] went through Bagrewand, passing the city of Karin, took the road to a certain spot and encamped opposite [Vardan].

Early next morning, with great haste they ranged themselves brigade opposite brigade, front opposite front, and then clashed in battle. And the war was fought with increasing intensity and they fought very hard. And the Lord visited defeat upon the king of the Iranians and all his troops. They were crushed before the swords of their enemies and fled from them in frantic panic. Not knowing their path of flight, [the Iranians] went and took refuge in the great river called Euphrates. But the water rose and swept away that multitude of fugitives as though they were a host of locusts; and many were unable to save themselves on that day. The king, however, was able to escape by a hairsbreadth, together with a few men thanks to the elephants and horses. He fled through Aghdznik' and on to his abode.

[10] [The Armenians] took the entire camp, together with the royal treasures. They captured the *Bambish* ("queen") and the camp and they seized the *Mashaperchan*, the entire palankeen of very heavy gold which was worked with precious stones and pearls, which they called the palankeen of glory [*despak p'arats'*]. They also took the Fire which the king always used to take around with him to bring him aid, and which was

regarded as greater than all the fires and which they called [the] *At'ash* [fire]. A multitude of the senior grandees had drowned in the river, as had the *Movpetan Movpet*. Blessed is God, always [g27].

Chapter 2

Anushirvan's belief in Christ and his baptism by the bishop, and his death; the enthronement of Ormizd; Vahram's striking the troops of the T'etalats'ik', the war with the king of the Mazkut's and his death there; the rebellion and flight of the Vahramakan troops from Xosrov; the coming of Vahram; how Xosrov sought aid from the emperor Maurice.

Prior to the rebellion [c.572], this Xosrov, who was called Anushirvan, during his reign [531-79] had made the country strong, for he was a peace-lover and a builder of the land. But when the rebellion occurred [Xosrov] thereafter [11] was roused to anger, regarding himself innocent [and saying]: "I was the father, not the lord, of the land and I nourished all like sons and dear ones. And now," he said, "may God seek this blood from them." This Xosrov during his reign closed the Gate of Chor and of Aghbania/Aghuania. He seized and handcuffed the Egerats'ik' king. Through warfare he took Pisidian Antioch and he settled the captives by the royal abode.

He built a city and named it Veh Anjatok' Xosrov, which is called Shahastanin Oknoy. And he took Dara and Callinicos through raiding, enslaving the Cilician parts.

[Xosrov] ruled the kingdom for 48 years. Now as he was dying, the radiant light of the divine Word was born in him, for he believed in Christ, saying: "I believe in one God Who made Heaven and Earth Whom Christians worship, confessing Father and Son and Holy Spirit, for He alone is God; and there is no other than He Whom the Christians revere."

He ordered his attendants to send the *mogpet* far from [12] court to a place of work, that others be ejected from the [g28] royal abodes, and he summoned the head bishop (*Episkoposapet*), who is called the Eran *kat'oghikos*. [Xosrov] was baptised by the latter and commanded that divine services be held in the chamber. He read the message in the Lord's Gospel, and he communed in the envivifying Body and Blood of the Lord. Bidding farewell to the *kat'oghikos* and the Lord's Gospel, [Xosrov] sent him to his place.

After a few days he departed this life in good old age. Christians took his body and placed it in the tomb of kings [*i shirims t'agaworats'n*]. Ormizd, [Xosrov's son], ruled after him [Hormizd IV, c. 579-590].

Now here is [a list of the] generals of the Iranian king who came one after the other to the country of Armenia from [the time of] the rebellion of Vardan, lord of the Mamikoneans, the son of Vasak, up to the present. Some of them died in battle, some battled, some triumphed and then departed. When [13] they killed Suren the *marzpan*, that same year a certain Vardan Vshnasp came, accomplished nothing, remained for a year and then departed. After him came Goghon Mihran with 20,000 armed troops and many elephants, and many to help him from among the countless peoples who inhabit the Caucasus mountains, the Hun people. [He also had] an order from the king to eliminate [all] men in the land of Armenia, to seize, dig up, to raze to the ground, to mercilessly destroy the country.

Thus did [Mihran] come. Some people were able to save themselves by going into impregnable fortresses; others fled to a more distant land. Nonetheless, many were unable to save themselves because whomever they chanced upon they put to the sword. [Mihran] battled once in Iberia/Georgia, but was defeated. He came to Armenia and took Ankgh by a false oath.

P'ilippos, lord of Siwnik', fought a battle between the city and Xaghamaxik', as well as a battle at Ut'mus village in Vanand, but was defeated in both. He remained seven years, and then departed [g29].

Then came Ormazd, son of Anushirvan Xosrov, the king himself. He had bound Vndo and left him in Gruangakan, [14] though Vstam had escaped and gone as a fugitive and not a few were the wars he stirred up in those days.

In this period there lived a certain Vahram Merhewandak, prince of the eastern parts of the land of Iran, who in his bravery had beaten the troops of the T'etalats'ik' and held through force Bahl and the entire country of the Kushans from the far side of the great river called Vehrot as far as the place called Kazbion. [Indeed], on the far side [of the river] he had left behind the spear of the brave Spandiat about whom the barbarians say "Having reached this far in battle, he cast his spear into the river."

It was then that this Vahram made war on the king of the Mazk'ut' who was in those parts on the far side of the great river. [Vahram] struck at the multitude of his troops, killed the king in battle, and ravished all of the treasures of that kingdom.

Then [Vahram] sent to the Iranian king by means of his messengers documents announcing the glad tidings [but] only an insignificant part of the loot from the very great treasures—the insignia of the [fallen] kingdom among the honored goods—[while] he dispensed all the [rest of the] [15] treasure among his troops according to each one's merit.

Now when king Ormazd saw the envoys who had come with the good news, when he read the letter of greeting from the troops and received from the worthy royal treasures the gifts of war-portion while outwardly he humored the men, inwardly he was blazing with wrath and saying: "I recognize the insignia of honor, [and that] the meal was more than great, but from the treasures amassed it is not proper that such [a small amount] should be forwarded to the court."

So, in return for the message of good news, he ordered [g30] written a *hrovartak* filled with rage, and he sent [troops] from the brigade of *hamazars* and royal *p'ushtipans* to go to [Vahram's] troops and take all the loot from them. The troops went and began demanding [the loot].

At that point the entire force became excited and killed the king's men. They left the king's service, seated [16] Vahram as their king, swore an oath according to their custom, united and left the East. They headed for Asorestan, to kill their king, Ormazd, do away with the House of Sasan, and establish Vahram on the throne of the kingdom.

[He] quickly assembled and took along the multitude of brave and warlike peoples of the East. While there was such chaos occurring in the land of Iran, [in Armenia] Yovhan *Patrik* and Byzantine troops were holding the city of Dwin under siege. They were fighting using [siege] machinery and were close to destroying the wall.

When news of this [i.e., events in Iran] reached them, they left off [the siege] and departed for Atrpatakan. They ravaged the entire country, putting all men and women to the sword. Taking all the loot, captives, and booty, they returned to their country.

Now when the clamorous news of this [event] reached Ormazd, the king of Iran, at the court of the Sasanians, he felt no few pangs of alarm. Summoning the *naxarars* who were at the royal court, the brigades of *hamaharzes* and the *p'ushtipans*, he planned to take the treasury of the kingdom [17] and the entire court host, pass across the great Tigris river by bridge to Vehkawat [or, via Zom to Vehkawat], cut the bridges down and find asylum in the multitudinous hosts of the king of the Tachiks.

However, this did not come to pass. For the king's men, and *hamaharzes* and *pushtipans* resolved to kill Ormazd [g31] and to enthrone his son Xosrov. They decided to free [Vndo, Vstam's brother] to make him their leader and chief of the operation. They went to Gruandakan fortress and released him and all the captives with him. [Vndo] sent a trustworthy messenger with very swift horses to his brother. [18] They went to Gruandakan fortress and released him and all the captives with him. [Vndo] sent a trustworthy messenger with very swift horses to his brother Vstam with the written message: "Come as fast as you can, and participate". And Vstam arrived quickly.

Then all the *naxarars* and commanders of troops, and soldiers assembled in the hall of the court at an hour when they met there. Entering the royal chamber, they seized, quickly blinded and then killed king Ormazd.

They enthroned [Ormazd's] son, [Xosrov II Aparvez, first reign 590] as king of the land of Iran, then began to prepare to flee to the other side of the great Tigris river. Not many days later Vahram arrived with speed, like a pouncing eagle.

Because Xosrov was a small boy when enthroned, his uncles [*k'erhink'n*, "mother's brothers"] Vndo and Vstam took him across the great Tigris river by bridge, destroying the bridges after them. [Meanwhile], Vahram came [19] and took all the *tun*, treasury, and women of the court and sat upon the throne of the kingdom. He ordered wooden rafts tied together and crossed the river to seize Xosrov. But [the latter], out of dread, was in no way able to halt for rest. As soon as [his party] crossed, they fled, wondering on the road whether it would be better to go to the king of the Tachiks or to the king of the Byzantines.

Finally they decided it best to seek refuge with the king of the Byzantines. "For", they said, "despite the hostility existing between [us], nonetheless [the Byzantines] are Christian and merciful, and they are unable to break a sworn oath". Going west by a direct route, they entered the city of Xaghab where they stopped.

[As for Vahram], although he crossed the river he was unable to catch up. He returned to Ctesiphon [g32]. [The text styles Xosrov *ark'ay* and Maurice *t'agawor*, though elsewhere both are called *t'agawor*. Hereafter we shall translate *t'agawor* as "emperor" when it refers to the Byzantine ruler, and as "king" for the *shah*.]

Then king Xosrov sent men bearing costly gifts to emperor Maurice, and he wrote him the following: "Give me the throne and place of rule [which belonged] to my fathers and [20] and ancestors: dispatch an army to assist me defeat my enemy; establish my reign and I shall be your son. I shall give you the areas of the Syrians, Aruastan in its entirety as far as the city of Nisibis and from the country of the Armenians, the land of *Tanuterakan* rule [extending] as far as Ararat, and to the city of Dwin, and as far as the shore of the Sea of Bznunik' [Lake Van] and to Arhestawan [I shall also give] a large part of the land of Iberia/Georgia, as far as the city of Tiflis. Let there be an oath of peace between the two of us, lasting until our deaths, and between our sons who rule after us".

The emperor assembled the entire senate to ask their advice. He said to them: "The Iranians have killed their king Ormazd and then enthroned his son. However, the troops of the realm seated yet another man as king in the East, and he [Vahram] came with a large army and seized the kingdom for himself. [Ormazd's] young son has come to us as a fugitive seeking an auxiliary army from us, and in return has promised to do thus and so. Now what shall we do, accept him? [20] Is he worthy of acceptance or not?" [The senators] replied: "It is not worth accepting him, for [the Iranians] are an impious people, and thoroughly false. For, in times of their own

difficulties they make promises, but when the turmoil ends, they break those promises. We have suffered much wickedness from them. Let them wipe out each other, and we will have peace."

King Xosrov was in great danger then and could see death before his eyes because, having escaped from the lion's mouth, he had fallen into the mouths of enemies from which there was no escape.

However, the emperor rejected the senate's counsel, and instead sent his own son-in-law, Phillipicus, entrusted with a reply of acceptance [for Xosrov]. He received [Xosrov's] oath and gave him an imperial auxiliary army [including] Yovhan *Patrik* from Armenia, the *stratelat* Nerses [g33] from Syria plus their troops. They mustered 3,000 cavalry [massed] in hundreds and in thousands, in brigades, under their own banners.

The mother of [the Iranian commander] Shapuh was the daughter [22] of the *Asparapet* (who was from the *naxarar* House of the Part'ews which had died out) [The text seems corrupt: *dustr Asparapetin aynorik, or er naxarar tann Part'ewats', ork' merheal ein...*] and the sister of Vndo and Vstam. Vndo himself was a wise and sagacious man, and very brave-hearted, as I have said. He fought a great battle at Melitene, but was defeated and left. Then came Tam Xosrov who fought two battles: one in Basen [district] at Bolorapahak where the Murts' and Arax [rivers] mingle; and one in Bagrewand [district] at Ket'n. He was very successful in both [battles]. After remaining for two years, he departed.

Then came Varaz Vzsur who fought one battle at Ut'mus village in Vanand. At first he was driven off, but he later triumphed. He remained for one year, and then departed.

Then came *marzpan* Hrahat who went to Mrtsuni [having] his kinfolk for support in battle. They were defeated there, but later triumphed. Turning thence he fought and won a battle at Tsaghkajur in Bznunik'. He departed after four months.

[23] Next came *marzpan* Hrarti Datan. Thereafter, however, the Iranians were unable to resist the Byzantine troops. It was during this period that Ormazd was killed and his son Xosrov was enthroned. [Hrarti Datan] departed after two years.

After this Iranian border-guards came [and this continued] until the expiration of the peace which had existed between the Iranians and the Greeks, between the two kings, Maurice and Xosrov.

Then came Vendatakan, then Xorakan. The latter was killed by Iranian troops at Garni who then rebelled and went to Geghums. Then came Merakbut, then Yazden, then Butmah, then Hoyiman [g34].

[Page 24]

[This is the] Book of the Times the History of Kings an Iranian romance [regarding] the universal defeat of that Sasanian brigand, Xosrov Apruez [*Matean zhamanakean patmut'iwn t'agaworakan Vep ariakan vanumn tiezerakan, hen Sasanakan yApruezn Xosrovean.*] who put everything to flame, agitated the sea and land, and brought ruin upon every country.

I shall narrate what happened to the country, how it was ruined, making use of legends [*charhets'its'...arhaspels vipasanelov*]. [I shall tell] about Wrath from On High, how anger blazed forth below; about the fire and the bloodshed, the pillaging expeditions, the raids which brought death [accompanied by] the screams of *dews* (demons) and the roar of dragons. [I shall speak of] the race of Mages [*zazants' k'awdeats'*], about men descended from giants, armed braves, cavalymen from East to West, from North to South; about the Southerners [the Arabs] who arose with great turbulence and attacked [Iran and Byzantium] and executed the command of the Lord's anger over every country. [The Arabs] spun like a whirlwind,

became a storm, and corrupted everything below them, devastating mountains and hills, tearing apart plains in various places, and crushing rocks and stones under the trampling hooves of their horses. Now I shall begin the romance about that destructive corrupter, Xosrov, God's accursed [g35].

Chapter 3

Vahram's attack on Xosrov, and the two letters to Mushegh; Mushegh's loyalty to Xosrov; the great battle; the defeat of the rebels; Xosrov's lack of gratitude toward Mushegh which resulted in Mushegh's plans to kill him; the writing of an accusation to the emperor by means of the Byzantine princes; the emperor's dissatisfaction with that and the letter to [the princes] and to Xosrov; the dispatch of Byzantine troops; the summoning of Mushegh to the palace by the emperor.

After the death of Kawad's son, Xosrov, his son, Ormazd, ruled over the land of Iran [579-90]. [Ormazd's] mother, Xosrov's wife named Kayen, was the daughter of the great Khaqan/Qaqan (Xak'an), king of the T'etalats'ik'. Thus [Ormazd] inherited a bad [nature] from his father's line, but an even more bestial [nature] from his mother's line.

He did away with all the *naxarars* and [26] the earlier, more indigenous Houses of the land of Iran. He killed the great *Asparapet* of the Part'ew and the Pahlaw who was [descended] from the son of Anak (whom [the Armenians] put to death) whom that bandit king Xosrov of Armenia took as a *dayek*, whom they spirited away to the court of their king in Iran [The text seems corrupt: *Span sa zAsparapetn mets zpart'ewn ew zpahlawn or er i zawake Anakay mahaparti. zor arhareal dayekats' i hine anti Xosrovay ark'ayi Hayots' p'axuts'in i durhn ark'uni iwreants' i koghmans parsits'*]. The king fulfilled [on the son] the rewards promised to his father Anak once [the son] had fled there, namely, the *bun* [native habitat] of Part'ewakan Palhaw itself. He tied a crown on his head and exalted him, making him second in the kingdom.

The *Asparapet* had two sons, one named Vndo, the other Vstam. They accepted troops from the land of Armenia and assembled whomever they found at hand then. When they mustered they were some 15,000 men, each brigade of *naxarars* [arranged] in hundreds and in thousands in brigades and under their banners. All were armed, all were choice warriors, [27] burning with bravery, like fire. They neither panicked nor turned back. Their faces were like eagles'. Their light-footedness was like the lightness of wild goats running upon the plains. With dilligence and full loyalty they took the road.

The Mithraist rebel took his troops [The translation is uncertain: *arheal apstambin mihrats'eloy n zazwrs iwr...*], elephants, and all the royal treasures and reached Atrpatakan. They encamped, at a little distance from each other, in the district of Vararat. Then Vahram wrote a *hrovartak* to Mushegh and to other *naxarars* of Armenia. It went as follows:

"I had thought that as soon as I started battling with your enemies, you would come from those parts and help me; and that I and you, united, would do away with that universal pestilence, the House of Sasan. But you, massed and coming against me in battle, are helping them. I am not afraid of the army of Roman elders who have come against me. But you Armenians show the love of your master at an inopportune time. Truly, did not the House of Sasan abolish your country and lordship? Why was it that your fathers always rebelled and went to serve those [the Byzantines] who to this day are fighting over your land? Should you come against me you will destroy so much of your merit, for [28] should Xosrov triumph, the two of them united [i.e., Xosrov and the emperor Maurice] will remove you from their midst. If, however, it is agreeable to you, break with them, unite with and aid

me. Should I triumph, I swear by the great god Aramazd, by the lord Sun, by the Moon, by Fire and by Water, by Mihr and by all the gods, that I shall give you the Armenian kingdom. Make whomever you want the king. And I shall leave you the entire country of Armenia as far as Kapkoh and the Gate of [Caucasian] Aghbania/Aghuania; from the Syrian area: Aruastan and Nor Shirakan as far as the boundaries of the Tachiks, for this [territory] was yours from your ancestors; [I shall give territories] extending westward to Caesarea in Cappadocia. I shall not rule beyond the Arasp river [g37]. Let the treasury of the Aryan kingdom be considered sufficient for me and you. That should be plenty for you before your kingdom is established".

Then, in accordance with their [Iranian] custom, [Vahram] wrapped up salt, and sealed it with the *hrovartak*.

[The partisans of Mushegh] received and read the *hrovartak*, but they neither replied nor did they reveal [its contents] to many [*naxarars*] because they feared their disunity.

[29] But [Vahram] wrote a second letter:

"I wrote to you to break with them, considering all the lands and treasures of this kingdom sufficient for you and me. You, however, chose not to listen, and you did not respond. I feel sorry for you, because tomorrow at dawn I will show you splendid elephants mounted by troops of armed braves who will rain down upon you arrows of iron, shafts of tempered steel dispatched by hard-hitting archers, powerful young men, well-armed, and swift Tachik horses, axes and swords of tempered steel, and blows enough for Xosrov and for you."

Mushegh replied to him [as follows]:

"God's compassion goes to whomever He grants it to. You should feel sorry for yourself, not for us. I have come to regard you as a boastful man, someone who takes comfort not in God, but in bravery and the strength of elephants. And now I say to you that if God so wills it, tomorrow you will be embroiled in a battle with braves who will explode upon you and your multitude of elephants like the most violent clouds in the sky. An enormous explosion will be heard from on High, and a flash of lightning, and armed men on white horses with unerring spears will attack you and pass through your hosts the way lightning does through an evergreen forest, burning [30] the branches as the bolts rain down from Heaven to earth [g38], burning the brush of the fields. For, should God will it, a whirlwind will carry off your might like dust, and the treasury of the court will return to the court."

Among [the Iranians] were Vndo and Vstam, about whom I spoke earlier. The Iranians had about 8,000 cavalrymen. At early dawn the next morning, just as the sun was rising [the troops] drew themselves up, front facing front, and clashed in battle. The massing and the melee were violent and in the agitation the destruction was enormous. After fighting from dawn to dusk, both sides became fatigued with warfare.

The killing was so great that a torrent of blood flowed in streams and watered the entire country. Unable to resist, the army of rebels fled before the Byzantine troops. [The latter] pursued them, covering the plains and roads with corpses, until it was dark night. [The Byzantines] put many to their swords; many others they arrested, binding their hands to their necks, and leading them before the king.

A multitude of elephants was coming at a violent speed. Behind them were the armed *azatagund*. From below [the Byzantines] [31] pierced the armor of the cavalrymen who were mounted on elephants. Fighting fearlessly and courageously, [the Byzantines] killed many elephants, cavalrymen, and elephant-keepers and were able to forcibly lead off a multitude of the elephants, which they brought before the king.

Thence they turned upon the campsite of Vahram's army. In one tent they found the court treasury and all the priceless, countless, inestimable treasures of the kingdom. This was all taken as booty. With their swords they dismembered many gorgeous thrones of diverse sorts. Going to the area in phalanxes, they loaded [the goods] onto a multitude of camels and mules. Everyone filled up with much great loot.

The Iranian troops then were able to gather a not insignificant part of the treasures and take them to their court. King Xosrov on that day grew more powerful as a result of this victory, more so than any of his enemies, and his kingdom was established.

[Xosrov] ordered that the multitude of arrested horsemen and elephant-riders be stripped, that their hands be tied upon their shoulders, and that they be trampled under the elephants' hooves. But they could find no trace of Vahram. [32] For he had fled and gone as a fugitive, and landed in Bahl Shahastan where, upon Xosrov's word, they themselves killed him.

Some days after this great battle, king Xosrov sat in his tent. Before the king were all of his grandee *naxarars*. The Byzantine army was encamped at a day's distance from [the Iranians], densely massed, brim full of their booty.

The king began speaking as follows: "In truth has there ever been any one of the world's kings who, being able to seize another king—his own enemy, the destroyer of his kingdom—did not have him killed, and did not exterminate all the males [with him] from his land? [What king, instead of doing these things] would adopt [such a royal fugitive], crown him, and exalt him by adorning him with purple, defeat his enemies, establish him on the throne of his kingdom, give him courtly treasure out of his own treasures, and benevolently free him to go his way? My father, emperor Maurice, bestowed such benefits on me which no man could bestow upon his own beloved son." Some of those [*naxarars*] responded to [Xosrov] as follows: "King, live forever! We do not know whether or not gratitude is fitting, for every kingdom is made stable by treasure, [33] [yet the Byzantines] have looted all the kingdom's treasures."

The king replied: "I shall directly retrieve the treasures of my kingdom from them, together with [other] treasures they have amassed, for all of that belongs to me. But the one thing that disconcerts me is the fact that that [Vahram], who hates his master, lived and departed. He is a brave man and will again assemble troops from among the braves of the peoples of the East."

[The *naxarars*] answered him: "They helped that ingrate to flee. With our own eyes we saw how that Mushegh Mamikonean took [Vahram], gave him horse and weapon and released him. They said this because they wished [Mushegh] ill, since, viewing his grandfather evilly, their hearts hardened against him. Yet the king never wondered about the matter, since he was a small boy, and inexperienced. Nor did he recollect the agitation of such [Armenian] soldiers. Rather, he fixed his mind on those falsehoods, saying: "Let that Mushegh be summoned here and be bound hand and foot, until I inform the emperor about him."

[The king] immediately ordered a note [*yetkar*] to be written [34] [to Mushegh]. He dispatched one of the envoys to Mushegh [with the message]: "Come quickly. An extremely important matter has come up." [Xosrov] gave this command to his *p'ushtipans*: "Be ready. When [Mushegh] arrives, and when I signal you with my hand, pull his arms back and tie him up. But be prepared, for he is a brave man. And see to it that he neither dies, nor kills me. Should he die, I will be answerable for him to the emperor." He similarly commanded his ushers [*barapanats'n*], saying: "Take care that when Mushegh comes to the entrance of my tent you remove his belt and sword. Tell him, 'it is not legal to go before the king with a weapon.'"

Now while [Mushegh] conducted a review of his troops, ascertaining the number living and the number which had died in battle, [Xosrov's] messenger came before him. [The messenger] greeted him and gave him the letter. Taking the letter, Mushegh asked him: "Is this a greeting, and [does it mean] peace?" The

messenger replied: "It is indeed a greeting and [signifies] peace. I do not know what else it says, only that I was commanded to summon you quickly." [Mushegh] immediately began preparing himself [35] as though he were going to war, for it had entered his [g41] mind that perhaps some military matter had come up, or that he would be rewarded with gifts for his labors. He took along 2,000 armed men, *azats* and non-*azats*, whom he found worthy of honor, and he felt confidence in his cavalry.

He wrote to Yovhan *patrik* to release him. [The latter] so commanded that [Mushegh] travel with such preparation [as he had planned], and he ordered all of [Mushegh's men] to see to their own armaments. They armed, and departed.

[Mushegh's forces] entered the [Iranian] army and were close to the court *Mashkaperchan* ("tent", "pavilion") when an order reached him not to approach with such a multitude, but rather to have them encamp at a distance, and to appear before the king with only a few men.

[Mushegh], however, did not consent to this. Instead, he went with his troops close to the entrance of the court tent. Iranian soldiers, well-armed, were standing around the tent. Dismounting from his horse, [Mushegh] went to the entrance of the tent with 50 men. The men remained as they [36] were, each one armed, and with a horse. The king was horrified as were all the soldiers with him, and began to conceal their treachery. As soon as [Mushegh] reached the entrance of the tent, ushers at the door approached him and said: "Remove the belt and sword from your waist, and remove your armor, because it is not lawful to go before the king [armed]." Doubt stirred in [Mushegh's] heart and he began to condition and prepare himself for attack. He responded to the ushers as follows: "From my childhood I have been the table-companion of kings [deriving from the time] of my ancestors and grandfather. And now I have reached the door of the court, the place of review. Am I to remove my armor, my girdle and belt now, when I never do so even in my own House, even when rejoicing? Or indeed, am I worthy of the wickedness of you Iranians?" Then he ordered someone to go to the soldiers to have the auxiliary army move forward. He himself turned to go.

[37] The king was informed that [Mushegh] refused to enter so [unarmed], and instead had turned and left. So the king started to conceal his wickedness, saying: "Let [g42] him overlook it, let him come as he pleases." For [Xosrov] himself was a lad, and his troops were few and far between. They called [Mushegh] back, saying: "[The king] ordered that you may enter as you wish." [Mushegh] turned and said: "Let me see what boon the king of kings plans to give me."

[Mushegh] entered the tent, [going] before the king accompanied by seven men. He prostrated himself in reverence to the king, and then stood up. But the king did not extend his hand as hitherto had been done [in a gesture of] receiving and greeting him. Rather, he remained there frozen, and they stubbornly faced each other that way.

The king grew frightened and dismayed, and was unable to give the order he had planned, or to say anything, great or small, because of his dread. Once again [Mushegh] quickly left the tent. They brought him his horse; he mounted and departed. As soon as the king saw that, he became extremely frightened. But wanting to conceal his injury, he arose from the throne and strode to the entrance of the [38] tent, went outside and dispatched a certain principal *naxarar* after [Mushegh]. He had salt sent, to swear an oath, and to call him back "so that you depart with honor and exaltation and do not consider that something else was intended."

[Mushegh], however, did not want it. Instead, he took to the road. Now he planned to deal with them as follows: [he planned] to attack his tent at the second hour, and to kill him. He so ordered the armed troops who stood around the tent of Xosrov. [But] because his troops were informed there was agitation, and they abandoned that plan and departed.

As they travelled, a certain one of the king's *p'ushtipans* strayed across their path. [The Mushegheans] seized him and took him to their own people. And Mushegh threatened him with an oath, saying that if he did not tell him what had transpired concerning [Mushegh] himself, he would die.

Then [the *p'ushtipan*] made [Mushegh] swear an oath that he would not turn him over to the Iranian king. He told everything. The next day at dawn [Mushegh] went to the door/court [g43] of Yovhannes *patrik*, saw him, and told him all the wicked tales. He had with him the *ostikan p'ushtipan* who also came and described all that had happened. The princes and [39] all the soldiers became agitated, but when reminded of the emperor's oath and his disturbed state, did nothing about it. They told [Mushegh] to write to the emperor, to familiarize him with all the wicked events. But Mushegh said in front of all of them: "If that man is not killed, every country under the lordship of the Byzantines will be taken by his hand."

Then [the Mushegheans] selected great gifts as their king's share of the booty: crowns and a diadem made of emeralds and pearls; a very great quantity of gold and silver, matchless precious gems, as well as the most outstanding garments which, in their ornamentation, were made for the kings of the Iranians; horses from the court, including the very court trappings for them.

They sent [the above gifts] and with them a written *hrovartak* announcing the good news, as well as an indictment of king Xosrov. [The Mushegheans] massed four hundred cavalymen to accompany the gifts. Now Xosrov became informed that they were about to deliver to their emperor as a share of the loot some of his treasures, and he learned that they had written a complaint about himself. Filled with bitterness, Xosrov sent an army after them, to reach them on the road, to destroy Mushegh suddenly and [40] secretly, to take the treasure of the court and to bring it back to him at once. The Byzantine princes also knew about matters. They sent after them a very forceful army; when they had passed by, not a single one [of the enemy] lived, and no word rose about it. [The text seems corrupt.] The troops took [the treasures] and brought them to the palace with great rejoicing.

The king received the gifts and sent a *hrovartak* expressing great thanks by means of his messenger. And he wrote [the Mushegheans] to abandon the plan in which they condemned the king. "If you do not restrain [Mushegh] I shall demand him from you" [the emperor wrote]. He also wrote to the king gratefully releasing everyone [g44].

Then king Xosrov gave presents to each according to importance, and dismissed them. He himself left Atrpatakan and went to Asorestan, to his native royal abode. And he was [41] established on the throne of his kingdom. He gave to the emperor the promised gifts: all Aruastan as far as Nisibis: the country of the Armenians which had been under his sway the *Tanuterakan* House as far as the Hurazdan river the district of Kote as far as the *awan* of Garhni and to the shore of the Sea of Bznunik' [Lake Van], Arhestawan and to the district of Gogovit as far as Hats'iwn and Maku. The area of the Vaspurakan brigade was in service to the Iranian king. Many of the *naxarars* of Armenia were in the Byzantine part, few were in the Iranian part. [Xosrov] also gave [to Maurice] a great part of the land of Iberia/Georgia, up to the city of Tiflis. The king summoned Mushegh to the palace, and he never again saw the country [of Armenia].

Chapter 4.

The piety of queen Shirin, who was king Xosrov's Christian wife; Xosrov's hrovartak.

[Xosrov], in accordance with their Magian religion, had numerous wives. He also took Christian wives, and had an extremely beautiful Christian wife from the land of Xuzhastan named Shirin, the *Bambish*, queen of queens [*tiknats' tikin*]. She constructed a monastery and a church close to the royal [42] abode, and settled priests and deacons there allotting from the court stipends and money for clothing. She lavished gold and silver [on the monastery]. Bravely, with her head held high she preached the gospel of the Kingdom, at court, and none of the grandee mages dared open his mouth to say anything—large or small—about Christians [g45]. When, however, days passed and her end approached, many of the mages who had converted to Christianity, were martyred in various places.

[Xosrov] commanded: "Let no infidel dare convert to Christianity and let none of the Christians convert to impiety. Rather, let each individual remain true to his paternal religion [*hayreni yawrens*]. Whoever does not hold his paternal faith [*zhayreni den*] but rebels from the religion of his fathers, will be put to death." But on the great feast of Psalm Sunday, [Christians] from the monastery of Shirin, and other Christians went to the entrance of the king's chamber, and worshipfully read the Gospel. They received presents from [43] the king, and departed. And no one dared to say anything to them.

Chapter 5.

Emperor Maurice requests the body of Daniel from king Xosrov.

It happened in those days that the emperor of the Byzantines requested from the king of the Iranians the body of that deceased man which was in Shawsh, in a copper basin in the king's treasury. The Iranians called him Kaw Xosrov, while the Christians called him Daniel the prophet. King Xosrov ordered that [Maurice's] request be granted. But queen Shirin was extremely agitated over this affair. When she was unable to change the king's mind, she ordered all the Christians of the land to request of Christ with fasting and prayers that the blessing [of Kaw Xosrov's presence] not leave their land.

The entire country assembled in that spot and beseeched Christ to prevent [the move] with fervent pleas and with tears. Mules were brought, as was the court palankeen [g46]; they took [Daniel's remains] and departed. But as soon as they passed through the city gate, suddenly those streams which flowed through the city and outside, dried up. The entire country [44] followed after [Daniel's remains] with cries and alarm.

As soon as they were at a distance of three *asparez* from the city, suddenly those mules [bearing] the palankeen halted and no one could make them budge. Suddenly they violently wielded their swords causing the mob and the brigade to scatter and they rushed back to the city. And as soon as they entered the city gate the waters of the river flowed and water gushed forth in abundance, as had been the case before.

They quickly informed the emperor about this. He had a mass performed [for Daniel] and ordered [his troops] to do as [the relics] willed. They left [the relics of Daniel] and departed.

Chapter 6.

Maurice writes Xosrov a letter of condemnation about the princes and troops of Armenia, suggesting that he send those [princes and troops] in his section to Thrace while [Xosrov] send those in the Iranian section to the East; the flight of princes in the Byzantine section to Iran; Xosrov dispatched the Hazarakar with much treasure to the Byzantine section to attract many [princes] to his side; the princes ravish the treasure; preparation for war; the message; disunity of the princes, some of whom went to the Byzantines, others to the Iranians.

In that period the Byzantine emperor ordered a letter written to the Iranian king. [It was] a complaint about the [45] princes of all Armenia, and their troops [which read as follows]:

"There is a crooked and disobedient people which dwells between us and causes trouble. Come now, I shall assemble mine and send them to Thrace. Assemble yours and have them taken East. Should they die, [our] enemies will be the ones dying; should they kill others it will be our enemies who perish, and we shall live in peace. But should they remain in their own country, we shall have no rest" [g47].

Then the two [rulers] united. The emperor started ordering [the Armenians] to assemble to go to Thrace, and he was implementing the order with extreme violence. [The Armenian princes and their troops] began to flee from the [Byzantine] sector and to go in service to the Iranian king—especially those whose country lay under [the emperor's] jurisdiction. Now [Xosrov] received all [the fugitives] with more exaltation and much greater gifts than the emperor had ever bestowed on them. This occurred even more when he saw them fleeing from the emperor, he wanted to win them to his side with even greater affection.

Now when the Iranian king observed the flight of people from the emperor, he sent to Armenia the [46] *Vaspurakan hamarakar* with much treasure, and very great honors to subdue [the princes] with it and to draw them into his service. The *hamarakar* went to Armenia with treasure loaded onto numerous camels.

Samuel Vahewuni with other comrades went against him, encountering him at the borders of the land of Atrpatakan. They took the treasure [but] granted the *hamarakar* his life. [The princes were]:

Atat Xorhxorhuni,
Samuel Vahewuni,
Mamak Mamikonean,
Step'annos Siwni,
Kotit, lord of the Amatunik',
T'eodos Trpatuni,

and about 2,000 cavalrymen. They were thinking as follows: "With that treasure we shall make Armenia our own. With their aid we shall wage war with both kings and forcibly return our country to ourselves." [But] once they reached the city of Naxchawan, their plan of unity came apart. They did not believe one another, they divided the treasure, and then encamped in the swamp called Chahuk. Meanwhile that *hamarakar* went to court and informed the king of all that had [47] transpired. And the emperor's words were vindicated.

King Xosrov ordered that a *hrovartak* be written to the emperor, requesting an auxiliary force. He also dispatched the *vaspurakan hamarakar* to Armenia. Then [the emperor] ordered the general Heraclius who

was located in the country [g48] of Armenia to take his troops and go against [the rebels] in battle. The troops of the two kings united in the city of Naxchawan. As these troops started to mass, they began sending messages [to the rebels] saying: "Let there not be warfare and bloodshed among Christians. Rather, abandon your stubbornness and resign yourselves to serving the king." By oaths they confirmed that "you have nothing to fear from the king." The *hamarakar* also said: "The king of kings sent me to you; indeed, I brought the treasure for you. You have nothing to fear from the king of kings." He gave an oath, in accordance with their custom.

[The Armenian rebels] began to separate and divide from each other. Mamak Mamigonean, Kotit, lord of the Amatunik', Step'annos and others withdrew, displaying themselves as innocent to the *hamarakar*, subduing their troops into serving the Iranian king. Meanwhile Atat Xorhxorhuni and Samuel Vahewuni and their troops fled. Going via the town called Sawdk', they reached the land of [Caucasian] Aghbania/Aghuania, heading for the Huns [48] and, after crossing the river called Kur, they encamped on the riverbank.

[The Huns] also reached the river and encamped on the opposite side. And as soon as [the rebels realized] that they could not trust the Huns' camp, they requested an oath from the Byzantine emperor and went into his service. Some went to the *hamarakar* and then returned to their own country. The *hamarakar* assembled all the princes and troops of the Iranian sector of Armenia encouraging them all through persuasion and sweet words. He united them and formed them into brigades. Leaving few in the land, he departed, saying: "until I find out about you, and a command comes to remain there." For it had entered his mind that others would come to [the rebels] and that they would multiply.

The emperor summoned Atat Xorhxorhuni and his troops to quickly come to the palace. He exalted [Atat] with splendor and honor, gave him numerous goods, and sent him to Thrace [g49].

[Page 49]

Chapter 7.

The Armenian princes in the Byzantine sector rebel; the war; the deaths of some in battle and the decapitation of two [rebels].

Once again the Vahewunik' *sepuhs* in the Byzantine sector—Samuel whom I mentioned above, and Sargis and Varaz Nerseh and Nerses and Vstam and T'eodoros Trpatuni—rebelled. They planned to kill the [Byzantine] curator while he was seated in the hot springs close to the city of Karin, to cure an illness. But [the latter] was informed somehow and fled to the city. Thus, when they invaded the bath, they did not encounter him. Then [the rebels] looted whatever they found, taking a great deal of booty, and departed to the secure Korduats' country. They wanted to have the stronghold there.

Now the Byzantine forces with general Heraclius and Hamazasp Mamikonean pursued them. [The rebels] approached the stronghold, crossing by bridge the river called Jermay (which is styled Daniel's bridge). They cut down the bridge and fortified themselves in a pass where they held the site of the bridge. [The Byzantines] were on the [opposite] riverbank wondering what to do. Because they were unable to find a ford, they wanted to depart. But unexpectedly, [50] a traveling priest strayed into their midst. They seized him and said: "If you do not show us the river's ford, we will kill you." [The traveller] took the forces and showed them the ford [at a place] below where they were. All the troops crossed the river. Some of them held [watch

over] the stronghold, others the bridgehead. [Some] held the mouth of the valley, others entered the stronghold and battled with them. The devastation was enormous, and [the rebels] were worn out.

Killed in the battle were Nerses, Vstam, and Samuel, who killed quite a few [warriors] around them in fight [g50]. But Sargis and Varaz Nerseh were arrested along with some others. They were taken to the city of Karin and later beheaded. When they were about to be beheaded, Varaz Nerseh said to Sargis: "Let's cast lots to see whom they kill first." But Sargis replied: "I am an old, blame-worthy man. I beg you, grant me this little respite, that I not see your death." So they beheaded him first. Now T'eodoros Trpatuni fled to the court of the Iranian king, for refuge. But [the king] ordered him bound and delivered into the hands of his enemies to be put to death. And [51] [the king] visited severe misfortunes upon him.

The enemies who were in the Thrace area, having looted the kingdom by means of quick engagements conducted by a countless multitude of troops, [now] wanted to destroy the kingdom and people of the lordship of the Romans, and to actually rule over the royal city itself.

Chapter 8.

The emperor's order to assemble his Eastern forces and those of Armenia to cross the sea and mass in Thrace, against the enemy. The selection of Mushegh as their commander. The victory, vanquishment, seizure, and killing of Mushegh.

The Byzantine emperor gave a command to assemble all of his forces which were in the Eastern area, for it was peacetime and he had no difficulties with Syria, from the Iranian lordship. He ordered that all [the troops] be taken across the sea and assembled against the enemy in the Thracian area. He also commanded the entire cavalry of Armenia, and the princes of the *naxarars* who were skilled and able to resist and fight in a spear-throwing battle. Again [Maurice] ordered that very many troops be raised [52] from the land of Armenia a second time, all of choice age and determination, [that they] be organized into decorated [g51] brigades, [*kazmel gunds zards*] armed, and transported to the land of Thrace against the enemy. Mushegh Mamikonean was their commander.

Now they went against the peoples who hold the area west of the great Danube river. A fierce battle took place in that country. The enemies' strength was shattered before the Byzantine forces, and they fled to the other side of the river. With great victory they quickly dispatched to the emperor a messenger with the glad tidings.

Then they went to an area below where they were, raiding. They crossed a narrow place, laying waste the entire country. Coming opposite [to the Byzantine army], [the enemy] waged a great battle, striking at the Byzantines, destroying them with great slaughter and driving them in front of themselves, as fugitives. [But] the enemy had [53] seized a narrow pass before them and so put [the Byzantines] to the sword. [The Byzantines] were barely able to save their lives in the strongholds of the land of Thrace. [The enemy] had arrested Mushegh Mamikonean, bound him to a tall tree in the forest, and killed him. On that day a multitude of the *naxarars* and troops of Armenia were killed.

Yet another time did the emperor order other troops called up, telling them only "Look out for yourselves."

Chapter 9.

Emperor Maurice's order to preach the [acceptance of the] Council of Chalcedon in Armenia; the division of the patriarchal throne.

Once again the emperor issued an order, this time to preach [acceptance of] the Council of Chalcedon in all churches of the country of Armenia, and to celebrate communion with his troops. Now the clergy of the churches of Armenia they treated as fugitives going to a foreign [g52] country. But many disregarded the order and remained where they were, not budging. Many of the faithful, however, [54] out of the love of ambition, united [with the Byzantines] in communion. Then the *kat'oghikos* Throne was divided into two parts. One [of the *kat'oghikoi*] was named Movses; the other, Yovhan. Movses was in the Iranian sector; Yovhan was in the Byzantine [sector].

Yovhan communed with [the Byzantines] but Movses was in no way close to them. The vessels of the entire Church which had been at [the church of] saint Gregory in Dwin, were taken and placed in a repository in the city of Karin. But [Yovhan] himself was later taken into captivity to Ahmatan *shahastan* in the country of the Iranians.

Chapter 10.

Again the emperor's command to assemble the Armenian cavalry. The troops of Sahak Mamikonean and Smbat Bagratuni are taken. Smbat returns to Armenia. The Armenian naxarars' plan. Smbat goes to the emperor with seven men. [Smbat] falls into arena [combat]. Smbat's bravery there. His liberation, and exile to Africa.

In that period, once again a command issued from the emperor to seek and demand 2,000 select armed cavalymen from the land of Armenia, to entrust them to two faithful [commanders] and to dispatch them with all possible haste.

[55] So 2,000 armed men were selected and entrusted to two faithful men: 1,000 to Sahak Mamikonean, and 1,000 to Manuel's son, Smbat Bagratuni. But they did not go by the same road. Rather, they sent Sahak Mamikonean with 1,000 [men] by way of Sebastia; and Smbat Bagratuni with the other [1,000 soldiers] via the Xaghteats' area. Sahak took [his] troops to the palace, to the king's presence.

Smbat, however, upon reaching Xaghtik', became his own man. For enroute the force became frightened and did not [g53] want to go [to Thrace] in compliance with the emperor's request. The emperor was informed about the events. By means of *hrovartaks* and trustworthy emissaries [the emperor] promised [Smbat] with an oath that he would send him back to his own country with great honor, and quickly. He promised the troops very great honors and goods, and thus did he coax them to a reconciliation. [Smbat's army] went united before the emperor. The emperor armed the troops, decorated them, and sent them to the borders of Thrace. He sent Smbat back to their country with great honor and many goods.

[56] Once again the remaining *naxarars* of Armenia started to unite, seeking to stop serving the Byzantine emperor. They also wanted to enthrone their own king so that they too not go to Thrace to die, but rather [they planned] to stay where they were and die upon their own soil. But there was disunity in their councils regarding what they established. And some of them went as informers taking the story to the emperor's ears. Then [the rebels] dispersed here and there eluding [the Byzantine forces].

In that period imperial ambassadors arrived with edicts. They seized Smbat and seven other men and took them before the emperor. Investigating them in front of the multitudinous public, the verdict was passed that [Smbat] be stripped and thrown into the arena. [Smbat] possessed a gigantic size; he was handsome, tall of stature, broad-shouldered with a body as [hard] as a fist, or the ground. He then was [57] mighty and martial and had displayed his bravery and force in numerous wars. Such was his strength that [once] when riding on a large and powerful horse, passing through a dense forest of pines and [other] strong tress, Smbat seized a branch of the tree, energetically wrapped his torso and legs around the horse's middle and lifted [the horse] bodily from the ground. When all the troops saw this they were awestruck with wonder[g54].

So they stripped [Smbat], dressed him in trousers and threw him into the arena to be eaten by the beasts. They released a bear on him. As soon as the bear was opposite him, [Smbat] shouted in a great voice, attacked the bear, punched its forehead with his fist and killed it on the spot. Second, they released a bull on him. [Smbat] seized the bull by the horns, shouted powerfully and, [when] the bull wearied of the fight, [Smbat] wrenched its neck and crushed both horns on [the bull's] head. The bull weakened, and drawing back, took to flight. But [Smbat] ran after the bull and seized it by its tail and worked on the hoof of one of its legs. The hoof came off in his hand, and the bull fled from him, lacking a hoof on one leg. The third time, they released a lion on him. When the lion was attacking him, [Smbat] was aided by the Lord, for [58] he seized the lion by the ear and jumped astride it. Seizing the throat, he choked and killed the lion. Then the clamor of the vast mob filled the place, and they sought the emperor's mercy on [Smbat].

Tired from the combat, [Smbat] sat on the dead lion to rest a little. The emperor's wife threw herself at [the emperor's] feet, requesting mercy for him. For previously the man had been dear to the emperor and to his wife and [the emperor] had styled him his adopted son. [The emperor] was astounded by the man's strength and endurance; and when he heard the entreaties of his wife and all the palace, he ordered that [Smbat] be pardoned.

Then they took him to the bath for washing. They washed and clothed him, invited him to dine at court, and revived him with food. After a short time, not because of any evil will of the emperor, but from the slander of envious people, [the emperor] ordered [Smbat's men] placed on a boat and exiled to a distant island. And he ordered that [Smbat] be taken to Africa with them and made tribune of the troops there [g55].

[59]

Chapter 11.

The summoning by king Xosrov to Asorestan of those naxarars whom the Hamarakar had left. The stationing of their troops at Spahan.

As I mentioned above, in the Iranian sector were *naxarars* and troops which the *Hamarakar* had left there and departed, pending an order from Court.

At that time, *peshaspik'* arrived with edicts, summoning them to court all together. The following are the *naxarars* and troops which went united to the court of Xosrov, king of Iran, each [*naxarar*] with his brigades and banner, in the sixth year of [Xosrov's] reign:

first, Gagik Mamikonean, Manuel's son,
second, Pap Bagratuni, son of *aspet* Ashot,
third, Xosrov, lord of the Vahewunik',
fourth, Vardan Artsruni,
fifth, Mamak Mamikonean
sixth, Step'annos Siwni,
seventh, Kotit, lord of the Amatunik'

and others of the *naxarars* among them. They reached Asorestan where the royal house was, and went before the king. [The latter] received them with delight, exalting them [60] with noteworthy, lavish honors. He ordered the grandee princes to be kept at court, that court stipends be arranged for them, a dwelling place for each, and that they be summoned daily to dine at court. [Xosrov] ordered that their troops be stationed in the Spahan land, and he sustained them with affection and all spontaneity [g56].

Chapter 12.

Xosrov judges his uncle Vndo. The killing of Vndo. Vstam flees to war with Xosrov, and he rules in the Parthian areas.

In this period king Xosrov took it into his head to seek vengeance from those *naxarars* who had slain his father. First he wanted to judge his mother's brothers. He gave the order to arrest that Vndo, about whom I spoke earlier, to bind and kill him. However, [Vndo's] brother Vstam was not at court then. Although [Xosrov] summoned him with entreaties and many persuasive words, so that [Vstam] would not find out about his brother's death, nonetheless, he learned about it somehow. Thus he did not fall into [Xosrov's] deception; rather, he went to the secure Gegham country as a rebel, and [61] subdued all of their troops to his command.

[Vstam] went raiding in the area of Rey, looting all the many lands of the kingdom of Iran. Then king Xosrov took his troops and troops from the emperor, and went against him. The battle between them occurred in the land of Rey, and no small feats of bravery were worked by the Armenian troops [*hayakoyt zawrats'n*]. When the king saw this, he was even more amazed.

And when the rebel was unable to resist, he secured himself in the mountains. Thus each side returned to its place, neither having triumphed. The rebel Vstam went to the secure Gegham country whence he went to the Parthian area, to his own native country of rule, so that the troops there submit to him [g57], then [he planned] to return.

The king went to Asorestan reaching his own court residence. The *naxarars* of Armenia were with him.

Chapter 13.

Death of the Armenian princes, rebellion of their troops at Spahan; the destruction of the country, seizure of the treasure and going to Vstam.

At that time death came to the princes of Armenia. Gagik Mamikonean and Xosrov, lord of the Vahewunik', died at court. Mamik Mamikonean, who had been released to Armenia for troops died a few days after reaching the city of Dwin. Meanwhile, Step'annos Siwnik' was fighting for the *tanuterut'iwn* with his father's brother, Sahak. Sahak wrote a document calling for [Step'annos'] death which he sealed with [his] ring and of the House of the bishop, and with the rings of yet other princes of Siwnik', to remind the king about the danger of their rebellion. Then the king gave the order to bind Step'annos and to put him in prison. They beheaded him on Easter day itself, in Easter week. [The king] sent Kotit to Nisibis as an emissary, but commanded cavalymen to lie in ambush in the [63] field, and, like bandits, to attack and kill him on the road. Now when their troops (which were stationed in the Spahan land) heard about these events, they rebelled and devastated the country. They took the court treasury, which was in the house of the *hamarakar* [and] which was amassed from the taxes of that land. Taking the road, they went to the secure Gegham country. The *perozakan* troops caught up with them. Some of them were killed by [the rebels'] swords [g58], some fell upon their own swords to avoid being captured. Some, escaping by a hairbreadth, got away to the secure Gegham country. But since [the rebels] did not encounter Vstam, they left for the country of the Parthians, and presented themselves before him.

Chapter 14.

Xosrov gives Smbat Bagratuni the marzpanate of Vrkan [Hyrcania] and greatly exalted him. Smbat improves the land of Hyrcania through spiritual and political education.

In that period Smbat Bagratuni became pleasing to king Xosrov's eyes. [Xosrov] gave him the *marzpanate* of the country of Hyrcania; made him prince over all of those areas besides; exalted him yet more with honors and authority; loaded him with gold and silver; adorned him in gorgeous robes of honor; gave him the belt and sword which had belonged to his father, Ormazd; assembled [64] under his authority the Iranian and Armenian troops and ordered him to go to the country of his appointment.

At that time there were some countries which had rebelled from the king of Iran, namely, Amagh, Rhoyean, Jrechan and Taparastan. [Smbat] defeated them in battle, striking with the sword, and putting them in the service of the Iranian king. He built up the entire country of his *marzpanate*, for it was in ruins. In that land were a people who had been captured from the country of Armenia and settled at the edge of the great desert which is in the [g59] area of Turk'astan and Delhastan. They had forgotten their own language, learning had weakened and the order of the priesthood had become reduced. There were also Kodreats' people there, who had been captured along with our own men. And there were not a few there from [lands subject to] Byzantine authority and from the Syrian area.

The Kodreats' people were not believers but a great light dawned on the Christians. They became confirmed in the faith, studied learning and language, and established [65] in the order of priesthood of that land a certain elder from among them named Abel.

Chapter 15.

Vstam comes to Asorestan to kill Xosrov and take the kingdom. His death from the treachery of Pariovk, king of the Kushans. The small battle in the land of Hyrcania.

In that period Vstam subjected to himself two kings of the Kushans, Shawg and Pariovk. He gathered all the troops in the East and went to Asorestan with a large and very powerful army, to kill Xosrov and take his kingdom for himself. [Vstam's] troops were at a distance from him, on the right and left, while the Kushan king Pariovk was [to provide] assistance from behind him. But then the deceitful king of the Kushans got the idea of going before [Vstam] with a few men, where he dismounted the horse and bowed to the ground seven times. Motioning him forward, Vstam ordered him to mount again. [But Pariovk] had placed an ambush for him on the road. Pariovk said: "Order the multitude to leave you, for I would have secret words with the king." [However], not sensing [Pariovk's] treachery, [66][Vstam] ordered the people to depart. As [the two of them] were going along the way, talking, suddenly the ambushers sprung out of their place of concealment, and attacked and killed Vstam. Pariovk had stipulated the time with his troops, and he now quickly notified them. [The troops] came up and captured Vstam's wife, all his bags and baggage, and then turned quickly and departed.

After some days had passed, all of the troops were informed, and they split away from each other, being as it were, abandoned, each one going to his own place. The troops of Geghum which were with [Vstam], similarly, departed and quickly reached the strongholds of their own land. And those Armenian men who had rebelled from Smbat [or: had rebelled in Ispahan] and gone over to Vstam, were among them. They went to the country called Komsh which is on the other side of the mountain which separates it from Hyrcania, and reached the village named Xekewand.

Shahr Vahrich and Smbat, *marzpan* of Gurgan, went against them with many troops. The Geghumk' troops were not more than 2,000 men. There was a battle in that country. They struck at the Iranian troops, put them to flight, killed many, arrested many, then turned back, encamping [67] near the battlefield. Those men from Armenia were with them. Many of the [Iranian] troops and the Armenians who were with *marzpan* Smbat died [68].

Chapter 16.

Discovery of a fragment of the Cross.

Three months prior to this battle, a vision appeared to a certain man named Yovsep'. He said: "A man with a wondrous appearance came and said to me, 'A battle will occur in three months in which many people will die. Go to the site of the battle, and let this be a sign for you. For you will see a man lying on the ground whose body glitters among all the corpses. Take whatever you find on him, and take care not to forget, for he/it is a miraculous thing.'" [Yovsep'] arose and departed. When he reached the place, he found things as they had been related to him in the vision for [the man] and all the corpses had been stripped, and [the man] had a chestnut-colored fur [or: a leather bag (*shagoyr mashkeghen*)] around his shoulders; his body was among the

corpses. [Yovsep'] took the fur and discovered that it contained a silver box with a cross in it fashioned from a large fragment of the Lord's Cross. He made the sign of the Cross [68] over himself with this, took it and went after his comrades.

All the troops left that place and went to the strongholds of their land. Then the king requested that Vahrich go home, and he sent great thanks to Smbat for he fought sincerely and was beaten and did not leave the place. He fled only after everyone else had fled [g62].

Chapter 17.

Smbat fights with the enemy and triumphs. He is more honored with estimable gifts and honors than all the other marzpans. Smbat's son, named Varaztirots', is appointed to the office of the king's cupbearer. Construction of the church of saint Gregory. Enthronement of the kat'oghikos.

The next year, all the brigades of the enemy assembled and went to the district of Taparastan. Smbat too massed all his troops and went against them in war. And the lord God betrayed the troops of the enemies into Smbat's hands and killed them all with the sword. Those who survived went as fugitives to their own place. Now those who were with them requested an oath and conditions and came before Smbat. That Yovsep' was among them, and related the vision and the many signs which [God] had worked among the barbarians. Yovsep' had his find with him. Then Smbat arose and kneeled [69] before him, took [the fragment of the Cross], made the sign of the Cross, and then gave it to a certain prominent man named Mihru from the Dimak'sean House whom [Smbat] had put in charge of his House as a loyal man and executor [of his orders]. He gave it to the church which priests kept at his court.

Then the king sent a *hrovartak* expressing great satisfaction [with Smbat], and exalting him with honor, above all of the other *marzpan*s in his lordship. He sent him cups of gold, royal clothing, and golden diadems set with precious stones and pearls. [Smbat's] son, whose name was Varaztirots', had been raised [by Xosrov] as though he were one of his own sons, elevated over all at court, and appointed to the office of cup-bearer, serving wine to the king.

Smbat held the *marzpanate* of that land for eight years. Then a command came to summon him with great exaltation to [g63] the royal court, and [the king] ordered him to go and see his own country in the 18th year of [Xosrov's] reign.

Now [Smbat] requested a command from the king [permitting him] to build the church of saint Gregory, which was in the city of Dwin. Because the blessed *kat'oghikos* Movses had died, [70] and no *vardapet* was there, [Smbat] hurried even more to request the king's order. When the order reached his country, [Smbat] concerned himself with the great [*kat'oghikosal*] throne so that they set up an overseer, a caretaker of the church, and a director of its salvation. They seated Abraham, bishop of the Rshtunik' on the patriarchal throne. Then they commenced laying the foundation of the church. [Smbat] assembled architects [skilled in working] stone, appointed trustworthy officials over them, and ordered that the work be brought to a speedy conclusion. The overseer of the fortress and [Armenia's] *marzpan* wrote a complaint to the king, saying: "[The church] is too close to the fortress and [will be] damaged by enemies."

The king's reply arrived, saying: "Pull down the fortress and build the church in that same spot." Amen.

Chapter 18.

Smbat is summoned to the Iranian court and receives the honor of the lordship (tanuterut'iwn) [and of being] called Xosrov Shum. He persecutes the Kushans. The killing of Datoyea. Once more Smbat and the Armenian naxarars go against the Kushans and Hephthalites. A certain wrestling match. Smbat triumphs and goes to the court with great glory.

[71] When winter had passed and spring arrived, messengers came [to Smbat] with *hrovartaks* summoning him to the royal court with great pomp. [Smbat] went before the king at the *dastakert* called "the great *dastakert*." Leaving the hall, he resided [*nsti*] in Bob and in Bahghak [g64].

Then the king gave him the *tanuterut'iwn* known as Xosrov Shum. He adorned him with gorgeous clothing, in a hat and muslin robes embellished with gold; he exalted [him] with unbelievable honors, a bejewelled camp, troops, and silver thrones, and gave him charge of the lesser *diwan* of the land. He gave him four-toned trumpets and guards for his court selected from the soldiers at court. He assembled under [Smbat] an enormous force in the eastern country of the Kushans; and he ordered [Smbat] to make whomever he wanted the *marzpan*.

Now [Smbat] departed and reached the nearby country of his first rule, Komsh. He summoned the troops of his own [72] countrymen from Hyrcania, and then went directly to the East.

Here are [the names of] the princes of the Armenian *naxarars* who were with [Smbat], each with brigade and banner:

Varazshapuh Artsruni
Sargis Tayets'i
Artawazd, Vstam, and Hmayeak Apahun
Manuel, lord of the Apahunik'
Vrham, lord of Goght'n [Vrham Goght'neats' ter]
Sargis Dimak'sean
Sargis Trpatuni

and other *naxarars*. And he had some 2,000 cavalymen from the land [of Armenia (?)]. [Smbat] saw that the Kushans' forces had spread across the entire country, raiding. But as soon as they heard about his reputation, they assembled and departed. [Smbat] went after them and quickly caught up. Now as soon as they observed that he was upon them, they turned and fought, clashing with each other in battle. The forces of the Kushans took to flight and were routed by the forces of Xosrov Shum. Many of them died, while many fled. Then [Smbat] again camped at Apr Shahr and in the district of Tos. He himself with 300 men stayed in the town called Xrhox [g65].

[73] Then the kings of the Kushans requested aid from the great Khaqan/Qaqan (Xak'an), king of the northern parts. A mob of 300,000 came to their aid. [This force] crossed the Vehrhot river which arises from the Ewighat country, Turk'astan [crossing] Dionos ep'esteays [Abgaryan, p. 102, has emended this to *yerkre Ewighatay*, *zGimnosp'esteays*... "the Gymnosophists"] Shamn and Bramn and flows to India. [The force] settled on the banks of the river, and spread out, raiding, to the west. Unexpectedly, they reached and besieged the town, for the village had a bulwark of fortification around it.

Smbat gave an order to the 300 men to fall upon the fortress which was in the town. He himself mounted, taking along the following three men: Sargis Dimak'sean, Sargis Trpatuni, and a certain arms-bearing mounted villager named Smbatik. Suddenly coming upon its entrance, they crushed the might of the mob and departed. The 300 men who were about the fortress in the town went against [his] troops. And the commander of his troops was a certain Iranian prince named Datoyean, by the king's order.

Now despite the fact that Smbat (who is Xosrov Shumn) sent to him, telling him to evade them, [Datoyean] did not want to listen; rather, he went against them in battle. They struck at the Iranian troops, putting Datoyean to flight, and then [74] spread out, raiding as far as the borders of Rey and the district of Aspahan. After devastating the entire country, they turned back to their army; and a command came from the great Khaqan/Qaqan (Xak'an) to Chembux to recross the river and to return home. Now a certain principal *naxarar* named Shahraban Bandakan arrived from the court to investigate Smbat and Datoyean. All the surviving troops vindicated Smbat; but Datoyean was taken in shackles to the court and was killed by the king. Then Smbat assembled troops and again armed [them] and called up many other troops [g66] to aid him, after which he went against the Kushan people and the king of the Hephthalites. [The latter] with great preparation arose and went against him. They reached the place of battle and massed against each other. The king of the Kushans sent a message to Smbat, saying: "What good is it going into battle with such a tumultuous mob, exhausting our forces. How shall our bravery be fathomed? But come, let you and I fight alone and compete, and today my bravery will be revealed to you." And he thumped himself with his hand and said: "Behold I am ready to die." With great speed the two prepared to attack, and approached each other. In the midst of the two armies [75] they battled each other. But they were unable to defeat each other quickly, for both were failing in strength, and heavily armed. But then aid came from On High. Smbat's spear pierced the *vertewamut bahlik* [?] and the security of the Kushan king's armor, and because [Smbat] struck him forcefully, he fell to the ground, dead. As soon as [the Kushan king's] forces saw [what had happened to] their king, they were horrified and turned to flight. [Smbat's troops] pursued them, raiding as far as Bahl *shahastan* of the Kushans, looting the entire country: Harew, Vaghages, all Toxorostayn and Taghakan. They also took numerous fortresses which they pulled down, and then returned in great triumph, with much booty. They went and encamped in Marg and in the district of Margrhot.

Messengers bearing the glad tidings quickly reached king Xosrov relating in full the bravery [displayed by Smbat]. King Xosrov rejoiced with exceeding delight. He ordered that a huge elephant be adorned and brought to the chamber. He commanded that [Smbat's son] Varaztirots' (who was called Javitean Xosrov by the king) [g67], be seated atop [the elephant]. And he ordered treasures scattered on the crowd. He wrote [to Smbat] a *hrovartak* [expressing] great satisfaction and summoned him to court with great honor and pomp.

[76]

Chapter 19.

Smbat dies peacefully. The Armenian naxarars rebel from the Iranians and go to serve the king of the north, the Khaqan/Qaqan (Xak'an).

When [Smbat] was about one day's journey from the royal court, the king commanded all the *naxarars* and his forces to go before him. He ordered his aides to take before [Smbat] a steed from the court stable decked out in royal trappings. [Smbat] went into the king's presence with great splendor and glory.

Now when [the king] saw him, he received him with joy, extending his hand which [Smbat] kissed, prostrating himself. Then the king said to him: "You served loyally, and we are even more satisfied with you. From now on, do not tire yourself by going to battle. Rather, stay close by. Take, eat, and drink, and partake of our joy." [Smbat] was the third *naxarar* in the palace of king Xosrov. But after a short while [Smbat] died in the 28th year of [Xosrov's] reign [618-19]. His body was taken to the country of Armenia, to his native place of rest, and they placed it in a tomb in the village of Dariwnk' which is in the district of Gogovit.

[77] Then [the *naxarars*] rebelled and went into the service of the king of the northern regions, the great Khaqan/Qaqan, by means of Chepetx of the House of Chen [The text may be defective here, and the translation of this sentence is tentative. The sentence lacks a subject.]. Then they went from east to west via the northern regions [g68] to join with the forces of that Chepetx, by order of their king the Khaqan/Qaqan. Going through the Choray gate with a multitude of troops they went to give aid to the Byzantine emperor.

Chapter 20.

The rebellion of the great patrician Atat Xotxorhuni, and his death. The Iranian and Byzantine borderlords.

Now what shall I say about another rebellion, that of Atat Xorhxorhuni? He was a great patrician, as a result of which the emperor ordered him summoned to the palace. He went to him accompanied by 17 men. [The emperor] exalted and glorified him and those with him by a fitting and attractive reception, and gave him gold and silver vessels and an extremely large amount of treasure.

[The emperor] ordered him to go to his forces in Thrace. Taking leave of the emperor [Atat] departed. While traveling [78] along the road he had the idea of rebelling and going over to the Iranian king. Departing from the road he went to the seashore where he encountered a boat. He said to the boatmen: "Take me across to the other side, for I have been sent on important work by the emperor." After cajoling the boatmen, they took him across. In a great hurry he quickly reached the country of Armenia. No one knew of his route until he was quite a distance from the shore. But then somehow they learned of his departure. Troops from city to city went against him but were unable to resist. Enroute [Atat] battled eighteen times and was the victor in every instance. Nonetheless, his forces were depleted. He went in haste and reached Naxchawan. The Iranians received him and he secured himself into the [g69] fortress.

King Xosrov was informed about what had happened and sent against [the Byzantines] Parsayenpet with troops. As soon as the force approached, [the Byzantines] left the city and departed. [Atat] quickly went to the Iranian king who received him affectionately, exalting him with honors, giving him treasures, and commanding that he be given a stipend from the court treasury.

[79] One year later Maurice died and Phocas ruled [602-10]. [Atat] planned to rebell and go to the Byzantine emperor. He began to prepare horses and to ready armaments and attract rascals to himself. News of this reached the king's ears. He ordered [Atat] to be bound hand and foot and beaten to death with clubs.

These are [the names of] the borderlords in the country of Armenia and the city of Dwin [in that sector of the country under] the lordship of Iran in the years of that peace:

Vndatakan Nixawrakan. The Iranian troops killed him at Dwin and themselves went as rebels to Geghum.
Merkut
Yazden

Butmah
Yeman

Now in the Byzantine sector [the borderlords were]:

Yovhan the Patrician,
Heraclius
general Suren

until thirteen years of peace had elapsed.

Then the emperor issued an order [which said]: "Thirty thousand cavalrymen are my levy for the land of [80] Armenia. Let thirty thousand families be assembled for me there and settled in the land of Thrace." He dispatched Priskos to Armenia to see to this matter. But when he arrived, news of a great disturbance reached him, and Priskos arose and departed with incredible haste [g70].

Chapter 21.

The killing of emperor Maurice and the reign of Phocas. The rebellion of general Erakghes (Heraclius) of Alexandria and general Nerses of Syrian Mesopotamia. Urha (Edessa) is besieged by the Byzantines and the city of Dara [is besieged] by Xosrov. Troops are mustered from [the Iranian sector of] Armenia and prince Juan Veh is made their commander. He comes to Edessa and takes T'eodos. The destruction of Dara. The Byzantines take Edessa; general Nerses is killed.

In the 14th year of king Xosrov and in the 20th year of Maurice's reign, the Byzantine army which was in Thrace rebelled from the emperor and enthroned as their king a certain man named Phocas. Going together to Constantinople, they killed the emperor Maurice and his son and seated Phocas on the throne of the kingdom. Then they themselves went to the Thracian area to oppose the enemy. Now the emperor Maurice had a son named Theodosius, and a rumor spread throughout the entire country that Theodosius had escaped and gone to the Iranian king. Thus there was no small agitation in the lordship [81] of the Romans, in the capital city, in the city of Alexandria in Egypt, in Jerusalem and Antioch and in all parts of the country, [people] took up the sword and killed one another.

Emperor Phocas ordered all the rebels who wavered [in their loyalty] to his rule to be killed. Many were slain there in the capital. He dispatched a certain prince Bonos with troops against Antioch, Jerusalem, and all parts of the land. He went and struck Antioch and Jerusalem and indeed the entire multitude of cities in that country were consumed by the sword [g71].

Then the general Heraclius who was in the Alexandria area rebelled from Phocas along with his own troops. He forcibly detached the country of Egypt [from Byzantine control]. In Syrian Mesopotamia general Nerses also rebelled. Together with his troops he entered and took the city of Edessa. [But a Byzantine] force came against him and besieged the city and [Nerses'] troops.

When king Xosrov heard about this, he assembled the entire multitude of his troops, went to the West, reached the city of Dara which he invested and besieged and started battling with. In the regions of Armenia,

troops were assembled, a certain [82] great prince, Juan Veh, being their commander. Then king Xosrov divided [his forces] into two parts: one part he left around the city; with the other he himself went against those forces which were besieging Edessa. He came upon them at dawn, unexpectedly. Some were slain by the sword; some took to flight; some (who had gone into the Euphrates river for security) died there; some were pursued. King Xosrov approached the city gate, so that they would open it and so that he might enter. Now Nerses dressed a youth in royal garb, placed a crown on his head and sent him [to Xosrov], saying: "This is Theodosius, emperor Maurice's son. Have mercy upon him, just as his father had mercy on you."

King Xosrov received him with great delight, departed, and went to the city of Dara. He kept [Theodosius] with him in royal honor. [Xosrov] besieged Dara for one and a half years. He dug beneath the city walls, demolished the wall, and took the city, putting everyone to the sword. He looted the city [g72], then went to Ctesiphon, since his troops were worn and wasted from battle. But another force from Byzantium came upon Edessa, fought with and took the city. They seized and killed Nerses, and shed blood there.

[83]

Chapter 22.

The Iranians and Byzantines battle in the plain of Shirak, and the Byzantines are defeated. Another battle takes place in Tsaghkotn. The Byzantines are defeated, T'eodos Xorxorhuni surrenders, giving the fortress to the Iranians. [T'eodos Xorxorhuni's] death.

Now Juan Veh, who had been dispatched to the Armenian area with his troops, reached the city of Dwin in Ayrarat district in wintertime. He stopped there, resting his forces until spring came.

Meanwhile the Byzantine troops were assembled in the town of Eghevard. The Iranian troops came against them and a battle took place in the plain of Eghevard in which [the Byzantines] struck at the Iranians and severely defeated them. The general [Juan Veh] was slain in the fight while the survivors fled, pursued. [The Byzantines] looted the Iranian army and then returned to their camp on the riverbank called Horhomots' [Romans'] meadow.

The next year [in 602/603], while king Xosrov battled with the city of Dara, another Iranian force was assembled in Armenia under the command of Datoyean. The Byzantine army assembled in the plain of Shirak, in the village named Shirakawan. They located there and stayed some days embroiled in internecine [84] strife, terrified of an attack by the foreign enemy. The Iranian troops came upon them, roaring like lions. Now [the Byzantines] abandoned their campsite and crossed the river to the plain called Akank', pursued by the Iranian troops which caught up with them. The battle took place in the village named Getik. As the two sides were approaching each other to fight, the inhabitants of the district had gathered in Ergina fortress. A multitude of youths streamed out of there armed with scythes and swords, and fell on the army's rear causing great slaughter, leaving wounded men, and taking loot and booty, returned to their fortress.

When the two armies met in battle, [the Iranians] put the Byzantine forces to flight before them. Pursuing them, they killed many men, filling the plains and roads with corpses. Very few survivors managed to flee. [The Iranians] took the loot and returned to their army. When they observed the evil that had been wrought, they attacked the fortress in a mob and took it. Many they killed with the sword, many out of fright hurled themselves from the precipice; some fled through the gate which faced the river, while all the rest were taken

into slavery. On that day 33 villages around the fortress [85] were similarly enslaved. [When the Iranians] had gathered up all the loot of the district, the troops turned and went to Atrpatakan.

Then Senitam Xosrov arrived. The Byzantine army was settled in Tsaghkotn close to the village called Angegh which the Aratsani river flows through, and on the other side they had pulled apart the village and drawn its fortification around themselves. Their commander was T'eodos Xorhxorhuni. The Iranian troops came and encamped near them, to their rear. At first, terrified, [the Byzantines] spoke of peace with them, recommending that they not fight and instead they would leave them the fortress and depart peacefully. But as they were united, the matter went no further. Rather, confident of their fortification, they thought they might accomplish something. The next morning the Iranian troops went against them. None [of the Byzantines] had armed himself or saddled his horse. If anyone did so, the retainers/children of the princes [*mankunk' ishxanats'n*] ran over [g74] and disarmed the men, tormenting them severely and slashing the horses' saddles with their swords.

The Iranian troops came and faced them from the plain area. They released a multitude of bowmen who emptied their [86] quivers shooting at them and piercing all the men and horses with their arrows. The horses, which were tied to mangers at the entrances to the tents, became frightened and trampled on all the tents and army. The enemy broke through the fortification and fell upon the army causing incredible destruction. [The Byzantines] broke through at one spot, some on foot, others mounted on the kicking horses, and fled. T'eodos Xorhxorhuni fortified himself in the fortress, while that evening [the Iranians] settled into [the Byzantines'] campsite. The next morning [the Iranians] dispatched a messenger telling them to quit the fortress and depart with all their baggage and equipment. They agreed to do so. On the third day [the Byzantines] opened the city gates and all departed as had been agreed. But the Iranian commander summoned T'eodos Xorhxorhuni and told him: "I do not have the authority to release you without a royal command. Rather [I must] have you taken to court. I shall write to the king all the good things about you, how you labored so sincerely and loyally to betray [the Byzantine] troops into our hands; how you came into [Iranian] service willingly." And he did write such things and had him taken to court. King Xosrov received [T'eodos] affectionately, arranging a stipend and money for clothing for him from the treasury. Subsequently, however, as there was a suspicion of treachery about him, he [87] ordered him killed. Now the fortress-keeper residing at Angegh fortress assembled his troops and went in person deeper into the countryside which he subjugated [g75].

After this there was another battle in the Basen area. [The Iranian commander] struck at and chased the Byzantines who fled back to their own country. He took the cities of Angegh, Gaylatus, Ergina, and the city of Tsxmkert in Dara. Receiving a command from the king, he departed.

Chapter 23.

Xosrov sends a large force to Asorestan under the command of Erhazman Xorheam, and [another army] to Armenia under Ashtat Yeztayar accompanied by the emperor Theodosius. Erhazman Xorheam subdues all of Mesopotamia. Ashtat wars with the Byzantines and subjugates the district of Karin. Shahan battles with the Byzantines and is victorious. The inhabitants of Karin are deported to Ahmatan Shahastan. Death(s) of the Kat'oghikoi. Shahan takes Caesarea, and Vasak Artsruni is killed.

King Xosrov left Dara and again released his troops. Once more he called up another multitude of soldiers, dispatching a large and extremely powerful army to the Asorestan area commanded by Xorheam, called

Erhazman. [Xosrov] commanded them as follows: "Whomever comes into [my] service, receive [88] with affection and keep in peace and prosperity; but kill with the sword whomever resists and makes war." He sent Ashtat Yeztayar with a large army (including emperor Theodosius, called Maurice's son) to Armenia. Xorheam took a multitude of soldiers and went to Asorestan, reaching Syrian Mesopotamia where he besieged and battled with the city of Edessa. Because of the multitude of the troops and the success of [the Iranian] battles, and because [the besieged] had no hope of salvation from any quarter, [the Edessans] spoke of peace requesting an oath so that [the Iranians] would not ruin the city. They opened the city gates and submitted. Similarly Amida, T'ela [g76], Resaina (Rhashayenay) and all the cities of Syrian Mesopotamia voluntarily submitted and were kept in peace and prosperity. [The Iranian troops then] went to the city of Antioch which also submitted voluntarily together with all the surrounding cities and their inhabitants, escaping from the sword of Phocas.

Now Ashtat Yeztayar came to the borders of Armenia in the 18th year of the reign. The Byzantine army was assembled in the district of Basen and again frightfully attacked him. A great battle took place in Du and Ordrü. The Byzantine army struck and was defeated with great destruction. Many men died in the battle, and there was no counting the number of corpses on the plain. [Ashtat] pursued them as [89] far as the city of Satala and then he himself encamped around the city of Karin with which he began to fight. [The inhabitants] resisted somewhat from within causing no small casualties to those outside. But then the emperor Theodosius came forward and said [to the inhabitants]: "I am your king," whereupon they consented and opened [the gates]. The principal men of the city emerged and were presented to him, then returned to the city and convinced them that he was indeed Maurice's son, Theodosius. After this [the inhabitants] opened the gates and submitted. [Ashtat] set up guards there and then went and captured the city of Hashteanak', Dzit'arhich, and Satala, Arhistia and Nicopolis, and then departed. Then Shahan the *Patgosapan* arrived, passed by the city of Karin, and Shahrayanapet came to Dwin, *ostan* of the *marzpanate*. Now Shahan went and encountered the Byzantine troops in the district of Karin. Engaging in battle, he struck them with the sword, putting them to flight and chasing them from the land.

Now in the 21st year of his reign [A.D. 611] king Xosrov ordered [Shahan] to move the inhabitants of the city of Karin and settle them in Ahmatean *shahastan*. The venerable aged *kat'oghikos* was among those led into captivity, together with all the Church vessels. He died there. His body was brought [g77] [back to Armenia] to the village of Awan and the church which [90] he himself had built. That same year the venerable *kat'oghikos* Abraham died. He was succeeded on the patriarchal throne by Kumitas, bishop of Taron who was from the village of Aghts' *awan*. During his tenure the construction of the church of saint Gregory was completed.

In the 20th year of king Xosrov [610], Shahan raided through the western areas, going to Cappadocian Caesarea. Now while the Christian inhabitants of the city arose and departed, the Jews went before [Shahan] and submitted. He remained in that city for one year. [The Iranians] seized Vasak Artsruni, son of Sahak *nahapet* of the Artsrunids, and crucified him opposite the city gate. Despite the fact that he had wrought much carnage among the Iranian troops, nonetheless, all the Iranian troops mourned him because of his bravery and manliness and because he was a powerful and tall youth. [They mourned] especially because he had been nourished and trained among them. That is what became of him.

[91]

Chapter 24.

Heraclius goes to Asorestan to fight against the Iranians. The great battle near the city of Antioch in which

the Byzantines were defeated. The country of Palestine submits to the Iranians. An Iranian ostikan takes up residence in Jerusalem. His murder. The great destruction of Jerusalem by the Iranians by sword and fire. The holy Cross is captured.

In that period, in the 22nd year of the reign of Xosrov [612], Heraclius gathered the troops in the area of Egypt, went by sea to Constantinople, killed the emperor Phocas and seated his son Heraclius on the throne of the kingdom, and pacified the entire country [g78].

Now as soon as Heraclius ruled [Heraclius I, 610-41], he dispatched messengers with great treasures and edicts to king Xosrov, requesting peace with great entreaties. King Xosrov, however, did not want to listen. He said: "That kingdom belongs to me, and I shall enthrone Maurice's son, Theodosius, as emperor. [As for Heraclius], he went and took the rule without our order and now offers us our own treasure as gifts. But I shall not stop until I have him in my hands." Taking the treasure, [Xosrov] commanded that his envoys be killed and he did not respond to his message.

Then Heraclius gathered his troops and encamped around the city [of Caesarea], obstructing their expeditions. After assembling troops under the direction of a certain Curator, [Heraclius] ordered [them] to be watchful, and then returned to his own place.

They besieged the city of Caesarea for one year and the Iranian troops were placed into straits regarding victuals, [92] nor was there hay for the multitude of horses. When warm summer days arrived and the area became filled with green plants, [the Iranians] set fire to the city and forcibly departed, striking at the Byzantines and pursuing them from behind. The Iranian troops then went to the land of Armenia, where they wintered.

The Iranian king quickly summoned Shahen to court and ordered him to return to the west in haste. Taking his troops in summertime, [Shahen] reached the city of Karin. He went against Melitene, took and subdued it. Then he went and united with the army of Xorheam which was in the Pisidia area and at the *Ostan* of Dwin.

Parseanpet Parshenazdat came and replaced Shahrayenapet; he was succeeded by Namgar Shonazp [or: Namdar Vshnasp], then by Shahrapghan. This latter fought a battle in Pars and was victorious [g79]. Then came Chrhoch Vehan [Abgaryan, p. 282 n. 378 emends this name to Erhoch Vehan.] He followed emperor Heraclius through Armenia as far as the borders of Asorestan. The battle occurred at Nineveh, in which he and all of his troops fell.

Now emperor Heraclius summoned a certain priest P'ilipikos to military service. This P'ilipikos was the son-in-law of emperor Maurice and had been in the military for a long time, [93] triumphing in battle. But then, during Maurice's reign, he took it into his head to cut his hair and to wear priestly garb, becoming a soldier in the covenant of the Church. Heraclius forcibly made him a general and dispatched him to the East with a large army. Going by way of Cappadocian Caesarea, he reached the Ayrarat district in the country of Armenia and encamped in the plain of the city of Vagharshapat. An urgent order from the [Iranian] king, entrusted to swift, fleet-footed messengers arrived [at the camp of the Iranian general in the vicinity]. With great peril [the general] forced his troops to pursue them and wipe them out without a trace. With great urgency [the Iranian troops] reached the district of Ayrarat and encamped on the bank of the Arax [river] wanting to engage in battle the next day. However, that very night P'ilippos went against them in Nig district, surrounding them from the rear of mount Aragats. [Then] he crossed through Shirak and Vanand close to the city of Karin, and arrived at his own borders.

Now because the Iranian troops were tired from such a long and dangerous journey during which many of the men and horses had died along the way, and since, therefore, [many] were on foot, they were unable to quickly pursue [the Byzantines]. [94] Rather, they stopped for a few days and then proceeded at a relaxed

pace passing into Asorestan. They encamped there in the same place they had been previously, expanding both to their right and left. And they ravaged [*lastet'an*] and seized the entire country.

In that period Heraclius enthroned his son Kostandin [Constantine III, 613-41], entrusting him to the Senate and to all the grandees of the palace [g80]. He confirmed him on the throne of his kingdom. Together with his brother Theodosius, he assumed the military command, assembled a multitude of troops, and crossed into Asorestan by way of Antioch. A great battle took place in the area of Asia, and the blood of the generals coursed violently to the city of Antioch. The groupings and clashings were severe and the slaughter was great in the agitation. Both sides were worn and wearied in the fight. However, the Iranians grew stronger and pursued the fleeing Byzantines, receiving the victory, in addition to [the renown of] bravery. Yet another battle took place close to the defile leading to Cilicia. The Byzantines struck the Iranians in a front of 8,000 armed men. And they turned and fled. The Iranians grew stronger, went and took the city of Tarsus and all the inhabitants in the district of Cilicia.

[95] Then the entire country of Palestine willingly submitted to the king of kings. The remnants of the Hebrew people especially rebelled from the Christians and taking in hand their native zeal [The translation is uncertain: *ew arheal i dzerhn znaxandz hayreni*, perhaps "manifesting desire for a/their homeland"] wrought very damaging slaughters among the multitude of believers. Going [to the Iranians], [the Jews] united with them. At that time, the army of the king of Iran was stationed at Caesarea in Palestine. Their general was named Rhazmiozan (that is, Xorheam). He spoke with [the inhabitants of] Jerusalem so that they submit voluntarily and be kept in peace and prosperity.

Now first [the Jerusalemites] voluntarily submitted, offering the general and the princes very great gifts, and requesting that loyal *ostikans* be stationed with them to preserve the city. However, several months later the entire mob of the city's young braves united [*miabaneal amenayn rhamik kacharhats'n`mankunk' k'aghak'in...*] and killed the Iranian king's *ostikans*. Then they rebelled from his service. After this [g81] a battle took place among the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem, Jew and Christian. The multitude of the Christians grew stronger, struck at and killed many of the Jews [The pejorative *satakets'in* is used]. The remainder of the Jews jumped from the walls, and went to the Iranian army. Then Xorheam (who is Erhamikozan) assembled his troops [96] and went and encamped around Jerusalem and invested it, warring against it for 19 days. Digging beneath the foundations of the city, they destroyed the wall. On the 19th day [of the siege] which was the 27th day of the month of *Marg* [The 11th month of the Armenian calendar, corresponding to June] in the 25th year of the reign of Xosrov Apruez [615], ten days after Easter, the Iranian forces took Jerusalem and putting their swords to work for three days they destroyed [almost] all the people in the city. Stationing themselves inside the city, they burned the place down. The troops were then ordered to count the corpses. The figure reached 57,000. Thirty-five thousand people were taken alive, among whom was a certain patriarch named Zak'aria who was also custodian of the Cross. [The Iranians] sought for the life-bringing Cross and began to torment [the clerics], executing many clerics at that time. Finally [the clerics] pointed out the place where it was hidden. [The Iranians] took it into captivity and also melted all the city's silver and gold, which they took to the court of the king. Now regarding those who had been arrested, an order was issued by the king to have mercy on them, to build a city and to settle them there, establishing each person in his [former] rank/profession [*karg*]. He commanded that the Jews [97] be driven from the city, and the king's order was quickly implemented, with great urgency. They placed a certain archpriest named Modestos over the city. He wrote [a letter] with the following import to the country of Armenia [g82]

[The main portion of chapter 25, which we omit, contains Modestos' letter to the Armenian *kat'oghikos* Kumitas, and the latter's response. These letters concern doctrinal matters. The translation resumes with the latter portion of chapter 25.]

The Construction of the Church of Hrhip'sime

Now in the 28th year of the reign of Xosrov Apruez [618], *kat'oghikos* Kunitas pulled down the chapel of saint Hrhip'sime in the city of Vagharshapat since it was a very base and gloomy construction, having been built by saint Sahak the patriarch and *kat'oghikos* of Armenia, son of saint Nerses.

It happened that while they were demolishing the chapel wall, unexpectedly a radiant and matchless pearl was uncovered, namely the virgin body of the blessed lady Hrhip'sime. [She had been martyred] by being torn limb from limb. Now since the venerable saint Gregory had sealed [the reliquary] with his ring, as had the venerable Sahak, *kat'oghikos* of Armenia, [Kunitas] did not dare to open it. He too sealed it with his own ring, and indeed he was worthy of sealing such a pearl with his ring, [it being the ring] of the third of the three [true] believers.

[98] Which is the pearl that comes not from the sea, but the pearl born from a royal line, nourished in the embrace of holiness and dedicated to God? The righteous long to behold you, and the venerable Kunitas is tenderly in love with you.

The venerable one had a height of nine palms and four fingers. The entire northern area was motivated to come to worship. Many afflicted people received healing for all kinds of pains. [Kunitas] built the church, and left the [g88] venerable [Hrhip'sime's reliquary] outdoors until the moisture of the lime in the wall had dried. Then he placed it in its abode.

[Kunitas] also raised the wooden roof of the blessed cathedral, repaired the crumbling wall and built a stone roof. This occurred in the years of Yovhank, priest of the monastery of the blessed cathedral.

[99]

Chapter 26.

Xorheam comes to Chalcedon with a large army to take Constantinople. The emperor's exhortation and gift. [The Iranians] consent to turn back. The Iranians again return to Byzantium (i Biwzandia). The great naval battle and the Iranian defeat. Xosrov's hrovartak to Heraclius. Heraclius goes against the Iranians. The battle near Tigranakert and Heraclius' arrival at Cappadocian Caesarea in triumph and with booty. He goes against Xosrov again and battles in the plain of Nineveh where the Iranians are defeated.

In that period it happened that Xorheam went to Chalcedon with his troops and encamped opposite Byzantium. He wanted to cross [the straits] and capture the capital city.

Now as soon as emperor Heraclius saw the brigand who had come to destroy his kingdom, against his will he exalted [the Iranians] as meritorious and beloved guests, and became friendly. He went before [Xorheam] with presents and gave gifts to the general and to the very great princes. [Heraclius] gave the troops salaries, and lunch and dinner for seven days. Then he boarded a boat which was in the sea, and spoke [the following words] to [the Iranian troops]: "What did you expect to accomplish by coming to this place? Could it be that you regard the sea as the land and would war with it? God, should He so will, could dry up the sea before you. But take care that you not displease God, and that He not take vengeance on you with the bottomless sea. For [God] did not give the victory to you because of your piety, but because of our impiety [g89]. Our sins did it, not your bravery. What is it that your king seeks from me that he will not make reconciliation? If he

wants to destroy my kingdom let him not attempt it. For it was God who established it, and no one is capable of destroying it except (should God for some reason want to) to fulfill God's will. Furthermore [Xosrov] has said that he will [100] enthrone our emperor. Well, let him enthrone whomever he wants, and we will accept him. Now if he is seeking to avenge the blood of Maurice, God took revenge on Phocas by means of my father, Heraclius. But [Xosrov] is still thirsting for blood. When will he be satiated? The Romans could have slain him, could they not, and done away with the lordship of the Iranians, when God delivered him into our hands. On the contrary, he was shown mercy. And now I seek the same from him—reconciliation and love. I request three things besides, so hear me out. Quit subjecting the land to fire, the sword, and captivity. Rejoice in your priests [The translation is uncertain: *yerets'unts'd awgut gtanek'*. Perhaps, "take comfort in your seniority"], for you are not oppressed by famine nor are royal taxes being lost. Behold, I am sending a *hrovartak* with offerings to your king to request reconciliation from him, and [that he make] peace with me." Taking [Heraclius'] gifts, [the Iranians] were persuaded to do as he requested. Now the Iranian king received the offerings brought from the emperor, but did not dispatch the emissaries. He ordered his troops to go to Byzantium by boat. Organizing ships, he started preparing to wage naval warfare with Byzantium. A force of sailors from Byzantium arose before him, and there was a naval battle from which the Iranian forces returned humiliated. Four thousand men [101] were lost on the ships, and [the Iranians] thereafter did not attempt such a project.

In the 34th year of his reign [624] king Xosrov wrote the following *hrovartak* to Heraclius:

"From Xosrov, the honored of the gods, lord of every country and king, born of the great Aramazd, to Heraclius, our stupid and useless servant [g90].

"You did not want to give yourself into our service, but rather, you call yourself lord and king, and those treasures of mine which are with you, you spend, and you deceive my servants. Furthermore, having assembled troops composed of brigands, you give me no rest. Did I not, truly, exhaust the Byzantines? You claim confidence in your God, yet how was it that your troops did not save Caesarea, Jerusalem and great Antioch from my hands? And could it be that even now you do not know that land and sea has been made obedient to me. Now it is only Constantinople which I have been unable to dig up. Yet, I will forgive all your faults. Bring your wife and children and come here, and I shall give you fields, vineyards and olive-trees by which you may live; and we shall [102] look upon you affectionately. Do not deceive yourself with your vain hopes, for how can that Christ who was unable to save himself from the Jews (but was crucified instead) save you from me? For [even] if you descend to the bottom of the sea, I shall stretch forth my hands and seize you. And then you will see me under circumstances which you would rather not."

Emperor Heraclius took the *hrovartak* and commanded that it be read in the presence of the patriarch and the grandees. Entering the House of God, they placed the *hrovartak* on the altar, and prostrated themselves before the Lord, weeping bitterly, so that He see the insults with which His enemies dishonored Him.

It pleased Heraclius and all the senators to seat Heraclius' small son, Kostandos [Constantine III, 613-41], on the throne of the kingdom. Heraclius prepared himself to take his wife and go East. At that point Kostandin was even more confirmed into the royal dignity.

Then Heraclius prepared with his wife, eunuchs, and princes of the court, and celebrated Easter in Constantinople. On Easter morning he sailed to Chalcedon, commanding his [103] troops to assemble at Cappadocian Caesarea. Then he himself left Chalcedon, came to Caesarea, pitched his tent in the midst of the army and ordered all the troops to be summoned. He read the *hrovartak* before them and related why he had [g91] come there. Now although [the troops] were agitated by the words, nonetheless they were exceedingly happy that [Heraclius] had come among them. They wished him victory and said: "We shall live and die with you, wherever you go. May all of your enemies become dirt beneath your feet, and may we wipe them off the

face of the earth of our Lord God and exterminate those people who insult Him." With 120,000 men Heraclius departed for the court of the Iranian king, travelling via the north, passing opposite the city of Karin. He reached Ayraratean Dwin, and Naxchawan, both of which he burned.

Then he went against the village of Gandzak, which he took, destroying as well the altars of the great Fire which they called Vshnasp. King Xosrov urged those of his troops in the Byzantine district to hasten and come to his aid. Yet although they organized his horses and entrusted them to [104] Shahen the Patgosapan, the army was fatigued and could not resist. [Xosrov] stored up his treasures at Ctesiphon and prepared to flee. Now the Iranian troops hurriedly reached Nisibis. Emperor Heraclius was informed that Xorheam had come to Nisibis. He took his troops and captives and turned through the secure land of Media, reaching P'aytakaran. Xosrov was informed that Heraclius had turned and reached P'aytakaran, and wanted to cross into Iberia/Georgia, via [Caucasian] Aghbania/Aghuania. He ordered his general, Shahr Varaz, to get ahead [of Heraclius]. He quickly reached Ayrarat, crossed to Gardman across from him and encamped facing [Heraclius] at the other Tigranakert. And Shahen with 30,000 troops arrived and encamped at Heraclius' rear in the *awan* of Tigranakert. Thus one [army] was encamped in one place, the other, at the other place, while Heraclius' army was between them [g92].

As soon as Heraclius saw that they had trapped him in the middle, he turned upon the troops at his rear, with resolute strength struck at [the Iranian general], routed him, and went through Tsghuk. He disentangled himself by going into the plain of Naxchawan through the mountains, in wintertime.

[105] Shahr Varaz and his troops, and Shahen, together with those of his men who had escaped, pursued [Heraclius]. Now the latter forded the Arax river going to the Vrnjunik' *awan*, and encamped in the fields there. The Iranian army caught up, but they were unable to ford the river that day. Heraclius reached Bagrewand and crossed to Apahunik', encamping in the village called Hrchmunk'. Shahr Varaz spread his troops out to Aghiovid and he himself with 6,000 select armed braves went and located in an ambush in the district of Archesh, so that he might pounce upon Heraclius' army in the middle of the night.

Heraclius was informed by the spies he had dispatched that Xorheam had arrived and was planning to attack him from the ambush. Heraclius, similarly, took select cavalymen and horsemen and dispatched 20,000 of them on him. Reaching Aghi, he found 500 of the [Iranian] advance-guard and destroyed them. Now one of those [Iranian] cavalymen escaped, reached Archesh and delivered to Xorheam the bad news that the enemy had come upon him and decimated the *peshopa* [advance-guard] troops at Aghi. Xorheam became furious with the man and ordered him bound, hand and foot, saying: "Up to the present, Heraclius has fled from me. Now that I have arrived with [106] such an army, should he not flee from me?" But while these very words were in his mouth, [the Byzantines] forcefully came upon them, surrounded the city on three sides and set it afire, burning to death multitudes of troops. If anyone was able to flee from it, [the Byzantines] seized and killed him. No one survived as all were consumed by the awful fire. Shahr Varaz, however, did escape seated on a horse which [g93] swam. Thus did he escape to those troops of his which he had assembled in the district of Aghiovit.

Now Heraclius took the loot and booty of their army and returned in great triumph reaching the area of Caesarea. Shahr Varaz hurried after him. But because the army was fatigued, he thought to go by way of a number of districts to rest and organize the troops. They went into the area of Asia where they spread out and stopped.

Then Heraclius took his forces and returned to the country of Armenia, crossing through Shirak, reaching the ford of the Arax river, crossing it to the *awan* of Vardanakert, and entering the district of Gogovit. Rhoch Vehan and the Iranian troops thought that they had fled. Now he travelled to Her and the district of Zarewand heading straight toward Ctesiphon against Xosrov. Once he had entered the borders of [107] the district of Atrpatakan, news finally reached Rhoch Vehan who took his troops and pursued him to the city of

Naxchawan. Thus he went hurriedly, day and night until he approached him. [Heraclius] went to the far side of Zarasp mountain in the country of Asorestan while [the Iranians] pursued him. [The Byzantines] turned west, and went to Nineveh. Other troops came to the aid of Rhoch Vehan from the king's court, the most select men of the entire kingdom. The soldiers joined together and pursued Heraclius. Heraclius drew them along as far as the plain of Nineveh and then suddenly turned back upon them with intense might. Now there was a fog over the plain, and so the Iranians were unaware that Heraclius had turned upon them until the two armies merged.

On that day the Lord so increased his compassion on Heraclius that [the Byzantines] struck them as though [the whole army] was but one man, and they killed the general in battle. [The Byzantines] surrounded the survivors and wanted to kill all of them. But [the Iranians] raised a clamour, saying: "Pious and benevolent lord, have mercy on us" [g94]. Then Heraclius commanded that they be set free. And now it was Heraclius who ordered that the country be raided.

[108]

Chapter 27.

The flight of Xosrov. Heraclius takes and burns Ctesiphon and returns to Atrpatakan. The killing of Xosrov and his forty sons. Kawad rules and makes peace with Byzantium and leaves the [Byzantine] borders.

Now the king of Iran, Xosrov, fled crossing the Tigris river to Vehkawat, severing the ties of the pontoon bridges behind him. Heraclius came and encamped close to the gates of the city of Ctesiphon and burned down all the royal mansions surrounding the city. Then he went to Atrpatakan with all his multitude and equipage, for Heraclius was terrified of Xorheam. Now Xorheam did not go to the aid of king Xosrov but instead went to where he was in the west. Then Xosrov turned to go home and commanded that a pontoon bridge be built. However, the king's women and children, the treasury, and stable of royal horses were at Vehkawat.

Xosrov began to assemble the remaining *naxarars* speaking to them with extreme criticism, saying: "Why did you not die at the site of the battle, instead of coming to me? Did you, perhaps, think that Xosrov was dead?" Then [the Iranian *naxarars*] decided on a plan of unified action, saying: "Although [109] we survived the enemy, there is no way for us to escape from Xosrov. Come, let us plan something." They then vowed [loyalty] to one another. They went by night over a draw-bridge to Vehkawat, which they seized. They appointed guards over it, then enthroned Kawad, [Xosrov's] son. They also had secretly removed the horse by which Xosrov had come to Ctesiphon [g95]. Thus, when the outcry of what had taken place reached Xosrov, and when he became filled with dread and horror, and asked for his horse, they did not find the horse in the stable. King Kawad then arrived with all of his troops. And king Xosrov, in a disguise, entered the royal garden and hid himself under some dense hedges. King Kawad ordered a search made and, going into the garden, they found him. They seized [Xosrov], sent him to the executioner, king Kawad gave the order, and they put him to death. Regarding Xosrov's children, the *naxarars* said: "It is not worth letting them live, for they will cause trouble." Then king Kawad gave the order, and all [the sons], some forty people, were killed in the same hour. [Kawad] requested for himself the women, treasury, and royal stable.

[110] Then king Kawad began to consult with the *naxarars* of his realm, saying: "We must make peace with the emperor, leave all of his borders, and make reconciliation on all sides." They unanimously agreed to do this. King Kawad ordered that a *hrovartak* of greeting be written to Heraclius, and that all of his borders be left alone. With this he sent an oath and salt to seal it. He dispatched a certain prince Rhash with very great gifts to confirm [the *hrovartak*] based on their unity.

Now when this Rhash arrived, gave the glad tidings, presented the *hrovartak* and went before them with gifts, emperor Heraclius and all his troops greatly thanked God. Then emperor Heraclius commanded that the multitude of [Iranian] captives and all the troops be set free. He wrote a testament of praise, established peace with an oath, and sent [to Kawad] a certain one of his principal *naxarars* named Yusdat' together with very great gifts. He also exalted [the Iranian emissary] Rhash, loading him with precious [g96] treasures, and dispatched him. He went peacefully back to his own place. And Yusdat' went to king Kawad and presented the *hrovartak* and gifts. Once again the terms of peace were confirmed by him, the boundaries were fixed by means of *hrovartaks* [111] which were sworn to and salt was sealed by Yusdat' in the manner of the first copy, and after [the custom of] the first kings. In [Yusdat's] presence [Kawad] ordered that Shahr Varaz be written to, to assemble the army and return to Iranian territory, quitting the Byzantine borders, though [the latter] did not want to obey that order. They released Yusdat' laden with treasures, and he departed.

Chapter 28.

Smbat's son Varaztirots' becomes a marzpan. The selection and deposition of kat'oghikos K'ristap'or and his succession by Ezr. The death of Kawad and the enthronement of his son Artashir. Heraclius writes to Xorheam requesting the holy Cross from him. The killing of Artashir and the reign of Xorheam. The killing of Xorheam, and the reign of Bbor, Xosrov's daughter. She was succeeded by a certain Xosrov, who was followed by Xosrov's daughter, Azarmiduxt. She was followed by Ormizd. Finally, the reign of Yazkert.

King Kawad summoned Varaztirots' (son of Smbat Bagratuni, who was called Xosrov Shum) and bestowed upon him the authority of the *tanuterut'iwn*. He made him *marzpan* and sent him back to Armenia with all of his father's belongings so that he would keep the land in a flourishing state. When he arrived in Armenia the entire land received him with delight. However, because the venerable *kat'oghikos* Kumitas had died and the position was vacant, [Varaztirots'] consulted with [112] everyone to find someone worthy of filling it. Then, at the proposal of T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik', they selected a certain hermit from the House of Abraham, named K'ristap'or, and seated him as *kat'oghikos*. He proved to be an arrogant and impious man whose tongue was as sharp as a sword. He stirred up much agitation and intruded the sword between Aspet and his brother, by slander. He occupied the patriarchal throne for two years. During the third year they made accusations against him. With all the bishops and princes assembled, they held an investigation. Two men from [K'ristap'or's] family came [to the trial] and testified against him in front of the entire multitude. So they took from him the veil of the dignity of the priesthood, removed him from the order and pursued him with indignities. They swiftly enthroned Ezr, from the district of Nig, as *kat'oghikos*. The venerable Kumitas had appointed him doorkeeper/warden [of the church] of saint Gregory. He was a humble and mild man who did not want to anger anyone, nor did unseemly words issue from his mouth.

Though king Kawad was planning to make the land flourish and wanted to make peace everywhere, he died after only six months [as king]. They enthroned Artashir who was his son, but a small boy [ca. 628/29]. Then Heraclius wrote the [113] following to Xorheam:

"Your king Kawad has died. The throne of that kingdom belongs to you. I shall give it to you, and to your son after you. Should you need troops I shall send as many as are required, and let there be a vow between you and me in addition to a sworn and sealed document."

Xorheam easily accepted and quit Alexandria. He assembled all his troops at one location and left them there. Then he went to the appointment where Heraclius had told him to be, with but a few [men]. When [Heraclius

and Xorheam] saw each other they were very joyful. And it was then that Heraclius swore to him that he would give the kingdom to him and to his sons after him, and that he would provide as many troops as necessary. The first thing that [Heraclius] requested of him was the life-giving Cross which he had captured at Jerusalem. Then Xorheam swore to him, saying:

"As soon as I reach the royal court I shall make inquiry about the Cross, and have it [g98] brought to you. Furthermore, I shall place the border wherever you wish, and confirm it in writing, with seal and salt."

[Xorheam] requested a small force from him, and they parted. Now Xorheam took his multitude of troops and went to Ctesiphon. He ordered some people to kill Artashir the boy-king, and he himself went and sat on the throne of the kingdom. He ordered all those principal men at the court and in the army whom [114] he could not trust to be killed by the sword, while others he had sent to Heraclius in shackles.

Then the venerable Heraclius dispatched loyal men to Xorheam concerning the lordly Cross. [The latter] sought for it with great urgency and barely gave it to the men who had come. They took it and departed hurriedly. [Xorheam] also gave them no small amount of goods and dispatched them with great joy.

Now one day Xorheam donned royal garments, mounted a horse, and circulated among the troops, displaying himself. Suddenly, from the rear, they attacked, struck, and killed him. Then they enthroned Xosrov's daughter, Bbor, who was [Xorheam's] wife. They appointed Xorhox Ormazd, a prince of Atrpatakan, as the commander at court. Now Xorhox sent [a message] to [Bbor], the *Bambish* [Iranian, "queen of queens"], [saying]: "Be my wife." She accepted, [replying]: "Come to me at midnight accompanied by [but] one man, and I shall fulfill your wishes." Arising at midnight, [Xorhox] took one man and went. As soon as he entered the royal chamber, the court guards fell upon him, [115] attacked and killed him. [Bbor], the *Bambish*, ruled for two years and then died. After her was a certain Xosrov, from the line of Sasan. After Xosrov was Azarmiduxt, daughter of Xosrov. After her was Ormazd, grandson of Xosrov whom the troops of Xorheam strangled. Finally there came to rule Yazkert [ca. 631-52], son of Kawad, grandson of Xosrov, who ruled in fear, since the troops of the land of Iran had split into three parts. The first army was the one in the Iranian and Eastern region; the second army was Xorheam's [g99] which was in Asorestan; and the third army was in Atrpatakan. However, the [center of the] kingdom was at Ctesiphon, and all [the Iranians] universally respected it.

Chapter 29.

The return of the Cross to holy Jerusalem. The determination of the boundary between the two kings. Forced by Mzhezh Gnumi, Ezr accepts the Council of Chalcedon. The plot of Mezhezh with Rhatovm against aspet Varaztirots' and the latter's flight. The king swears to him and he goes to the palace and is exalted. The evil plot of At'alarikos with the princes against his father. The exposure of the plot and the plotters' deaths. The exile of Varaztirots'. The bravery of Dawit' Saharhuni, who becomes Curopalate. The deeds of T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik'.

Now when the holy Cross of the Lord had fallen to the venerable, pious, and blessed king Heraclius, he enthusiastically [116] and joyfully assembled his troops. Then, taking all the royal attendants and revering the blessed, miraculous and divine discovery, they took [the Cross] back to the holy city of Jerusalem. They also took there all the vessels of the church which had been saved from the enemy, in the city of Byzantium. And there was no small amount of joy on the day they entered Jerusalem, with the sound of sobbing and moaning,

an outpouring of tears from their excited and moved hearts, and there was a tightening feeling in the king, the princes, all the troops and the inhabitants in the city. No one was capable of singing the sacred songs due to the tremendous and deep emotion [felt by the] king and the entire multitude. [Heraclius] took [the Cross] and reestablished it in its place; he put each of the vessels of the churches back in its place; and he gave wealth and incense to all the churches and inhabitants of the city [g100].

[Heraclius] himself then took to the road heading directly for Syrian Mesopotamia in order to personally see to establishing the cities of the borders. The boundary which was confirmed was the same as had been established under Xosrov and Maurice. The Cross of the Lord remained in the [117] heaven-built city until the taking of Jerusalem by the sons of Ishmael. At that time it was taken in exile to the capital city [of Constantinople] with all the church vessels.

A general of the Byzantines named Mzhezh Gnuni, from the country of Armenia, arrived next and personally took control of all the country of the borders. He told the *kat'oghikos* Ezr to come to him in the country of the borders and to take the sacrament of communion with the emperor. "Otherwise," he said, "we shall get ourselves another *kat'oghikos* and you will hold sway in the Iranian sector." The *kat'oghikos*, since he was unable to leave the country of his jurisdiction, requested a statement of faith from the emperor. A volume written by the emperor himself was quickly sent to him in which [the emperor] cursed Nestorius and all heretics, but he did not curse the Council of Chalcedon. The *kat'oghikos* went to the country of Asorestan, saw the emperor and communed after his fashion. As a gift, [Ezr] requested from the emperor the salt [mine] at Koghb, which he received. Then he returned to his home in great pomp. Subsequently, he resided with the Byzantine army, doing as the general wished. He arranged the orders of soldiers and the distribution of granaries for the entire country.

[118] Now *aspet* Varaztirots' (son of the great Xosrov Shum, styled Jawitean Xosrov [Forever Loyal to Xosrov] by the kings) completely built up the entire land of Armenia. But he did not submit to the great prince named Xorhox Ormazd of the Atrpatakan land, nor to his son and successor, Rostom, who [also] was a prince in the Atrpatakan area. There was great agitation between the two. Then the Byzantine general Mzhezh started to slander the *aspet* to prince Rostom, who was in Atrpatakan: "Let him not stay in Armenia, otherwise, there will be great agitation between the two kings." And he sent [g101] his brother Garik'pet to go and winter in Dwin; and then they would arrest the *aspet* and depart. However, because all the Iranian troops liked the *aspet*, one of the great princes there informed him, saying: "Look out for yourself, for they are going to arrest you, tomorrow." So *aspet* took his wife and children and fled at night to Taron. When he got there, he assembled his troops. [Varaztirots'] requested an oath from emperor Heraclius, that he not be alienated from his own land. Accepting [the emperor's] oath as genuine, he went to him in Asorestan. Then emperor Heraclius swore to him: "Stay with me for a brief time, then I shall dispatch you to your country with great honor." And [Heraclius] exalted him more than all the patricians in his realm. When [Varaztirots'] went to the palace, he gave him a royal mansion, a silver throne, [119] and an extremely large amount of treasure. Furthermore, [Varaztirots'] son, Smbat, was the beloved chamberlain of Heraclius.

Here is [an account of] the evil accomplished by the son of emperor Heraclius named At'alarik [Heraclionas, 638-41]. This concerns the great crime which deeply wounded his father's heart, broke a marvellous individual, made the beauty of his face fade and became the cause of the ruin of himself and of many others. Now [At'alarik], T'eodoros called Magistros, brother of emperor Heraclius' son, many of the grandees of the city, and Vahan Xorhxoruni all had united to kill Heraclius, and to enthrone his son, At'alarik. Included in the deliberation similarly was Varaztirots', son of Smbat Xosrov Shum; however, he did not consent to the slaying of the emperor and his sons. He said, rather: "You say that they are the *locum tenens* of God, therefore there is no need to do that [killing], nor do I unite with you in that plan." Now a certain curator who had been included in the deliberations, fully related the plot to the emperor. When the emperor had confirmed [the truth of the matter] [g102], he ordered that his son, nephew, and all those with them, be arrested in the morning.

The noses and right hands of all of them were cut off. [Heraclius] sent a message [120] to the *aspet*, saying: "Since you did as you did with regard to me and did not want to dip your hand into my blood and the blood of my sons, I shall not reach for you and your sons. Go where I order you, and I will have mercy upon you." Although the sides protested, saying: "Kill him," nonetheless, [Heraclius] did not want to listen to them. Rather he ordered [Varaztirots'], his wife and children taken to the island and city of tribulation named Ak'sor ["Exile"].

Also included in the plot was Dawit' Saharhuni, who was sent to the palace bound, by Mzhezh Gnuni. Bursting his bonds enroute to the palace, [Dawit'] killed the men who were taking him. He then returned and united the troops of Armenia with himself, suddenly attacking and killing Mzhezh Gnuni the Byzantine general, and Varaz Gnel Gnuni. [Dawit'] himself took over the military command with the support and affection of all the troops.

Now at the request of the princes, the emperor made him prince of all the lands and bestowed on him the dignity of curopalate. [Heraclius] confirmed [Dawit'] in his service. He held authority for three years in the greatest luxury. Then, however, he was dishonored by the troops and persecuted; and all the *azats*, being disunited, were the undoing of the country of Armenia.

[121] It was, however, only the pious prince T'eodoros of the Rshtunik' district who continually was organizing the troops of his area, and was on the alert day and night, as his deep wisdom dictated. He wrought not a few slaughters of the enemy, and he built up the island of Aght'amar,[acts which] enlivened many districts [g103].

Chapter 30.

The elimination of the Sasanian [dynasty] which held sway for 542 years. The birth of Muhammad and the entrance of the sons of Ishmael into the land of Armenia. The death of Heraclius and the reign of Constantine.

I shall discuss the [line of the] son of Abraham: not the one [born] of a free [woman], but the one born of a serving maid, about whom the quotation from Scripture was fully and truthfully fulfilled, "His hands will be at everyone, and everyone will have their hands at him [Genesis 16. 11,12]."

Twelve peoples [representing] all the tribes of the Jews assembled at the city of Edessa. When they saw that the Iranian troops had departed and left the city in peace, they [122] closed the gates and fortified themselves. They refused entry to troops of the Roman lordship. Thus Heraclius, emperor of the Byzantines, gave the order to besiege it. When [the Jews] realized that they could not militarily resist him, they promised to make peace. Opening the city gates, they went before him, and [Heraclius] ordered that they should go and stay in their own place. So they departed, taking the road through the desert to Tachkastan to the sons of Ishmael. [The Jews] called [the Arabs] to their aid and familiarized them with the relationship they had through the books of the [Old] Testament. Although [the Arabs] were convinced of their close relationship, they were unable to get a consensus from their multitude, for they were divided from each other by religion. In that period a certain one of them, a man of the sons of Ishmael named Muhammad, a merchant, became prominent. A sermon about the Way of Truth, supposedly at God's command, was revealed to them, and [Muhammad] taught them to recognize the God of Abraham, especially since he was informed and knowledgeable about Mosaic history. Because the command had [g104] come from On High, he ordered them all to assemble together and to unite in faith. Abandoning the reverence of vain things, they turned

toward the living God, who had appeared to their father, Abraham. Muhammad legislated that they were not to [123] eat carrion, not to drink wine, not to speak falsehoods, and not to commit adultery. He said: "God promised that country to Abraham and to his son after him, for eternity. And what had been promised was fulfilled during that time when [God] loved Israel. Now, however, you are the sons of Abraham, and God shall fulfill the promise made to Abraham and his son on you. Only love the God of Abraham, and go and take the country which God gave to your father, Abraham. No one can successfully resist you in war, since God is with you."

Then all of them assembled together, from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt [The text is corrupt here. The citation is from Genesis 25.18], and they set out from the P'arhan desert [being] twelve tribes [moving] in the order [of precedence] of the Houses of the patriarchs of their tribe. They were divided into 12,000 men, of which the sons of Israel were in their own tribes, 1,000 to a tribe, to lead them to the country of Israel. They travelled army by army in the order [of precedence] of each patriarchy: Nebaioth, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah [Genesis 25. 13-16]. These are the peoples of Ishmael. They reached Moabite Rabbath, at the borders of [124] Ruben's [land]. The Byzantine army was encamped in Arabia. [The Arabs] fell upon them suddenly, struck them with the sword and put to flight emperor Heraclius' brother, Theodosius. Then they turned and encamped in Arabia.

All the remnants of the sons of Israel then assembled [g105] and united, becoming a large force. After this they dispatched a message to the Byzantine emperor, saying: "God gave that country as the inherited property [i *kaluats zharhangut'ean*] of Abraham and of his sons after him. We are the sons of Abraham. It is too much that you hold our country. Leave in peace, and we shall demand from you what you have seized, plus interest. The emperor rejected this. He did not provide a fitting response to the message but rather said: "The country is mine. Your inheritance is the desert. So go in peace to your country." And [Heraclius] started organizing brigades, as many as 70,000 [troops] giving them as a general, a certain one of his faithful eunuchs. He ordered that they were to go to Arabia, stipulating that they were not to engage them [125] in war, but rather to keep on the alert until he could assemble his other troops and send them to help. Now [the Byzantines] reached the Jordan and crossed into Arabia. Leaving their campsite on the riverbank, [the Byzantines] went on foot to attack [the Arabs'] camp. [The Arabs], however, had placed part of their army in ambushes here and there, lodging the multitude in dwellings around the camp. Then they drove in herds of camels which they penned around the camp and the tents, tying them at the foot with rope. Such was the fortification of their camp. The beasts were fatigued from the journey, and so [the Byzantines] were able to cut through the camp fortification, and started to kill [the Arabs]. But suddenly the men in the ambushes sprung from their places and fell upon them. Awe of the Lord came over the Byzantine troops, and they turned in flight before them. But they were unable to flee because of the quicksand which buried them to the legs. There was great anxiety caused by the heat of the sun and the enemy's sword was upon them. All the generals fell and perished. More than 2,000 men were slain. A few survivors fled to the place of refuge.

[The Arabs] crossed the Jordan and encamped at Jericho. Then dread of them came over the inhabitants of the country, and all of them submitted [g106]. That night the Jerusalemites took [126] the Cross of the Lord and all the vessels of the churches of God, and fled with them by boat to the palace at Constantinople. [The Jerusalemites] requested an oath [from the Arabs] and then submitted.

The emperor of the Byzantines was no longer able to assemble his troops against them. [The Arabs] divided their army into three parts. One part went to Egypt, taking [territory] as far as Alexandria. The second part went north [to war] against the Byzantine empire. In the twinkling of an eye they had seized [territory stretching] from the sea to the shores of the great Euphrates river, as well as Edessa and all the cities of Mesopotamia, on the other side of the [Euphrates] river. The third part [of the Arab army] was sent to the east, against the kingdom of Iran.

In that period the kingdom of Iran grew weaker, and their army was divided into three parts. Then the Ishmaelite troops who were gathered in the east, went and besieged Ctesiphon, since the king of Iran resided there. Troops from the land of Media [Marats'], some 80,000 armed men under their general Rostom assembled and went against [the Arabs] in battle. Then [the Arabs] left the city and crossed to the other side of [127] the Tigris river. [The Iranians] also crossed the river, pursuing them. And they did not stop until they reached their borders, at the village called Hert'ichan. [The Arabs] continued to pursue them, [eventually] going and encamping in the plain. Present were Mushegh Mamikonean, son of Dawit', the general of Armenia with 3,000 armed men, and also prince Grigor, lord of Siwnik', with 1,000 men. [The Iranian and Arab armies] attacked each other, and the Iranian forces fled before them. But [the Arabs] pursued them, putting them to the sword. All the principal *naxarars* died, as did general Rostom. They killed Mushegh and two of his sister's sons, as well as Grigor, the lord of Siwnik', along with one son. Some [of the Iranian troops] escaped and fled back to their own land. The remnants of the Iranian forces assembled in Atrpatakan at one spot and made Xorhoxazat their general. Then they hurried to Ctesiphon and took the treasury of the [g107] kingdom, the inhabitants of the cities, and their king, and then hurried to get back to Atrpatakan. But as soon as they had departed and gone some distance, the Ishmaelite army unexpectedly came upon them. Horrified, [the Iranians] abandoned the treasury and the inhabitants of the city, and fled. Their king also fled, winding up with the southern troops. Now [the Arabs] took the entire treasury and returned to Ctesiphon, taking the inhabitants of the cities along too. [128] And they pillaged the entire country.

The venerable Heraclius ended his life in ripe old age. He reigned for 30 years [610-40/41]. [Heraclius] made his son Constantine swear to have clemency upon all those transgressors whom he had ordered exiled. He made him vow to send each back to his place, and to bring back the *aspet*, his wife and son, and to establish him in his former rank. "Should he want to go to his land, as I have sworn—and may my oath not be false—release him, and let him go in peace."

Heraclius died and his son Constantine ruled. But no one was chosen as general of the land of Armenia, since the princes were disunited and quit each other's presence.

The polluting army [of the Arabs] arose from Asorestan and came through the valley route to the land of Taron. They took [Taron], Bznunik' and Aghiovit and then, going to the Berkri valley via Ordspoy and Gogovit, poured into Ayrarat. None of the Armenian troops was able to carry the bad news to the *awan* of Dwin. There were, however, three of the princes who went and gathered the dispersed troops: T'eodoros Vahewuni, [129] Xach'ean Arhaweghean, and Shapuh Amatuni. They fled to Dwin, reached the Metsamor bridge, crossed it, destroyed it, and then they went to take the bad news to the *awan*. All the people of the land had assembled in the fortress, and they had come in harvest time for the vineyards.

T'eodoros went to the city of Naxchawan. The enemy Busha reached Metsamawr bridge but was unable to cross over [g108]. However, [the Arabs] had as a guide Vardik, prince of Mekk', who was called Aknik ["Little Eyes"]. Crossing the Metsamawr bridge, they raided the entire country. They accumulated a very great amount of loot and captives, then came and encamped by the edge of the Xosrakert forest.

On the fifth day [of the Arabs' sojourn], on a Friday, the 30th of the month of Tre [Tre: the fourth month in the Armenian calendar, November], they came against the city [of Dwin] and it was betrayed into their hands. For they set fires here and there, and drove away the guards on the wall by smoke and by shooting arrows. They then erected ladders, scaled the wall and, once inside, opened the city gates. The army of the enemy poured inside and put most of the city to the sword. Then, taking the loot and booty of the city, they departed and encamped at their same campsite. After passing some days there, they arose and departed by the same route they had come. They had a multitude of captives with them, some [130] 35,000 souls. Now the prince of Armenia, the lord of Rshtunik', who had been concealed in an ambush in the district of Gogovit, went against [the Arabs] with few troops. But he was unable to resist, and so fled before them. [The Arabs]

pursued [Rshtunik's troops] killing many of them. Then they went to Asorestan. This occurred in the days of *kat'oghikos* Ezr.

As a result of that battle, an order came from the emperor [granting] the military command and the dignity of patrician to T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik'.

All this took place as a result of *kat'oghikos* Nerses who succeeded Ezr on the *kat'oghikos* throne.

When the sons of Ishmael had arisen and issued from the desert of Sinai, their king Amrh ['Umar] did not accompany them. But when [the Arabs] had militarily routed both kingdoms, seizing from Egypt to the great Taurus mountain, from the Western Sea [the Atlantic Ocean] to Media and Xuzhastan, they then emerged with the royal army [and went] to the [g109] natural borders of the holdings of Ishmael. Then the [Arab] [131] king gave an order to assemble boats and many sailors and to navigate southwardly, going east to Pars, to Sagastan, to Sind, to Srman, to the land of Turan and to Makuran as far as the borders of India. The troops swiftly prepared and implemented the command. They burned every country, taking loot and booty. They then turned and made expeditions on the waves of the sea, and reached their own places.

We heard this [account] from men [who had returned] from captivity in Xuzhastan Tachkastan, who themselves had been eye-witnesses to the events described and narrated them to us.

Chapter 31.

Regarding the Jews and their wicked plans.

Now I shall speak about the plot of the Jewish rebels, who, finding support from the Hagarenes for a short time, planned to [re]build the temple of Solomon. Locating the place called the holy of holies, they constructed [the temple] with a pedestal, to serve as their place of prayer. But the Ishmaelites envied [the Jews], expelled them from the place, and named the same building their own place of prayer. [The Jews] built a temple for their worship, elsewhere. It [132] was then that they came up with an evil plan: they wanted to fill Jerusalem with blood from end to end, and to exterminate all the Christians of Jerusalem. Now it happened that there was a certain grandee Ishmaelite who went to worship in their private place of prayer. He encountered three of the principal Jewish men, who had just slaughtered two pigs and taken and put them [in the Muslim] place of prayer. Blood [g110] was running down the walls and on the floor of the building. As soon as the man saw them, he stopped and said something or other to them. They replied and departed. The man at once went inside to pray. He saw the wicked [sight], and quickly turned to catch the men. When he was unable to find them, he was silent and went to his place. Then many [Muslims] entered the place and saw the evil, and they spread a lament throughout the city. The Jews told the prince that the Christians had desecrated their place of prayer. The prince issued an order and all the Christians were gathered together. Just as they wanted to put them to the sword, the man came and addressed them: "Why shed so much blood in vain? Order all the Jews to assemble and I shall point out the guilty ones." As soon as they were all assembled and [the man] walked among them, he recognized the three men whom he had previously [133] encountered. Seizing them, [the Arabs] tried them with great severity until they disclosed the plot. And because their prince was among the Jews present, [the Arab prince] ordered that six of the principals involved in the plot be killed. He permitted the other [Jews] to return to their places.

Chapter 32.

Constantine dies as a result of his mother's plot, and Heraclius (son of Heraclius by his second wife) is enthroned. General Vaghentin (Valentinian) comes to Constantinople and enthrones Constantine's son, Kostas. The Iranians war with the Ishmaelites and are defeated. Aspet Varaztirots' returns from court, and dies. The Ishmaelites come to Atrpatakan, and divide into three wings They take Artsap'u fortress, campaigning against the sep'hakan gund.

When Heraclius died, his son Constantine ruled. [The latter] appointed Vaghentianos, called an Arsacid, as the general of his troops. He ordered his troops to go to the East [g111].

Constantine ruled only a few days before dying in the plot of his mother Martina, Heraclius' wife. Heraclius' son, Heracleonas, born of the Augusta Martina, was then enthroned [638-641]. [134] Constantine had been Heraclius' son by his first wife. Taking the initiative, Vaghentin went against him at Constantinople with his troops. He captured Martina, cut off her tongue, and then killed her with her two sons. They enthroned Constantine's son, Constans [II, 641-668], calling him after his father's name. Constans personally assembled the troops and went to the East.

During the first year of the reign of the Byzantine emperor Constans, and in the tenth year of the Iranian king Yazkert [641/642], the Iranians assembled 60,000 armed men to war with the Ishmaelites. The Ishmaelites fought them with 40,000 swordsmen, clashing in the district of Mark'. The battle lasted for three days until the foot soldiers on both sides were reduced. Suddenly the Iranian troops were informed that an auxiliary force had come to help the Ishmaelites. The Iranians fled from camp all though the night. The remnants of the Ishmaelite troops went against them in the morning, but found no one in the camp. so they raided across the face of the entire country, putting man and beast to the sword. They captured 22 fortresses and killed everything alive in them.

But who can relate the incredible disasters inflicted by the brigand Ishmael who whipped up sea and land? The prophet [135] Daniel long ago prophesied that such difficulties would come upon the earth. [He spoke of] the four beasts which represent the four kingdoms which arose on the earth. The first was the Western kingdom, which is Byzantium, represented by a humanlike beast. "Its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground." He said that this was diabolical idolatry. "And it stood erect, as a man, and it was given a human heart." Behold, the second beast resembles a bear. It is [g112] in the East and is called the Sasanian kingdom. "And the bear had three ribs in its mouth"—the kingdom of Persians, Medes and Parthians—and they said to it: "Arise and devour much flesh." Everyone knows how it ate. "Now the third beast was like a leopard with four wings of a bird, and possessing four heads." [The winged leopard] represents the Northern kingdom, Gog and Magog and their two comrades to whom had been given authority to fly in force to the north. "Now the fourth beast was awesome and dreadful with teeth of iron, and claws of copper. It would eat and devour then stomped the residue with its feet." This fourth emerged from the South and represents the Ishmaelite kingdom As the chief of the angels said: "The fourth beast will come to possess a kingdom greater than any kingdom, and will devour the entire world." "And from the ten horns, ten kings will arise but after them yet another shall arise who in wickedness [136] will surpass all the previous ones" [Daniel 7].

In the second year of the venerable Heraclius' grandson Constans' reign, Vaghentin planned to deceive the Senate through rhetoric and to personally acquire the throne, such that by crowning him, he would do what he wanted with his military command. He made the yoke of service weigh heavy on the inhabitants of the city, having as his support the 3,000 armed troops which he had brought with him and numerous other troops which had joined him. It was then that the men of the city gathered together before the patriarch, in the holy

church of God, and told him that [they wanted to] eliminate the weight of their service. They sent to Vaghentin [telling him] to abolish their service, but he did not want to hear it. Now there was a certain one of the princes present, named Antoninos, who said to Vaghentin: "What is their alliance, what is their plot? Besides, how could they dare to send you such a message? But if you command, I shall go and destroy their alliance and plot, and shall chase each one back to his place, that your [g113] [137] will be done." [Vaghentin] responded: "Go and do as you said" [Antoninos] arose and departed with a thousand men. As soon as he entered the church he began severely beating the principals. At this, the patriarch rose to his feet and said: "It is too much, and unjust to do what you are doing here." Anton attacked him and slapped him on the jaw, saying: "Go to your place." Then the mob became agitated and attacked [Antoninos], seizing him and dragging him through the city by his feet. After this they set him on fire. Vaghentin was informed and he was seized with trembling. Just then the mob poured in upon him, dragged him beyond the houses, beheaded him, and then took [the corpse] to the same place where they had burned Antoninos, and burned that too. Then they confirmed Constans on the throne of the empire. They made T'eodoros, a certain one of the loyal princes of Armenia, the general over those in the Byzantine sector.

As soon as [Teodoros] took the military command, he beseeched the emperor as a favor to have clemency on those [people] who had been exiled to Africa, especially on [138] Aspet, son of Smbat called Xosrov Shum. God made the emperor's heart mild, and he ordered that [the exiles] be brought to the capital. He received them as though they were beloved [personages] of the realm. He made [Aspet's] son Smbat the first *spatharios* among all the *spatharioi*, and a candidate. Thus, in the fifth year of his reign, he returned to the previous order. [The emperor also had clemency on] Vahan Xorhxorhuni and others besides. [Constans] dispatched a certain prince named T'uma to Armenia. He arrived, and did not want to destroy the oath [existing] between the emperor and the prince of Mark'. He united all the princes and took them with him to the prince of Mark'. He spoke with him about peace. And he received many goods from him and promised with an oath that he would have T'eodoros sent to the palace bound, since he was the prince of the land of Armenia. He then returned to the Armenian troops. As soon as [T'uma] reached the Kotayk' country, [his men] suddenly fell upon [T'eodoros], seized, bound, and had him sent before the emperor. Now when emperor Constans heard of this, he was exceedingly wroth, for he had not ordered that [g114] [T'eodoros] be bound. He commanded that he be released from bonds, and that the document accusing him be read. When [Constans] learned what the treachery really was he ordered [139] that [T'eodoros] be summoned to his presence. [Constans] received him with affection and with the honor due to his authority. He arranged a stipend and funds for upkeep from the treasury. He then commanded that T'uma be summoned, but he did not order him to enter the court. Rather, the examination was conducted outside [the chamber]. Lord T'eodoros Rshtuni was vindicated in his testimony and justice was done to him, T'uma was discredited and dropped from honor. It was at this time that Aspet [Bagratuni] and T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik', saw each other [again] and shed tears upon each other's necks. For they had been nourished together at the court of Xosrov, king of Iran. But Aspet could not be reconciled with Byzantine rule, instead he plotted treachery. He requested an order from emperor Constans so that [Aspet] could dispatch four men of his family to Armenia to bring him some things. The emperor commanded that the order be issued to him. Now [Aspet] disguised himself, took along three other men, reached the shore and showed the imperial order. He boarded a ship and quickly crossed the sea, resembling a bird, and soon reached Tayk' where he fortified himself. The people of Tayk' received him with delight.

In this period there was no small amount of turbulence in the land of Armenia, for a royal command arrived for the [140] general of Armenia to hold all the passes of the roads and to search the land's fortresses. Then it became known that [Aspet] had returned and was fortified in Tayk', Armenia.

Then the Byzantine general, T'eodoros, together with the princes of the army and the *naxarars* of Armenia ordered that *kat'oghikos* Nerses should be sent to Aspet and vow to him [their] loyalty in requesting that the authority of the land be given to him, and that his wife and children be sent back to him.

The *kat'oghikos* went and made an oath with [Aspet] so that he would not depart. Then [the *kat'oghikos* returned. They wrote to emperor Constans to treat [Aspet] according to [g115] the oath he had promised. For Aspet had written to the emperor, saying: "I am your servant and shall not leave your service. However, because some people told me 'You will return to [the service of the country] whence you came,' I became frightened and fled. But now, if I am considered worthy, I shall serve you loyally and give my life for your piety." Emperor Constans ordered that [Aspet] be made Curopalate, that he be given a crown of honor and the authority of the land. He further ordered that [Aspet's] wife and children be sent back with great splendor. He had [Aspet] given silver thrones and other very great gifts.

[141] Yet, before the *hrovartak* arrived, before he was honored with the dignity of Curopalate, [Aspet] became ill and died. They took his body and buried it near his father's, at Dariwnk'. The emperor established [Aspet's] eldest son, who was named Smbat, in his father's dignity, giving him the authority of the *aspetut'iwn* of his native *tanuterdom*. [The emperor] made [Smbat] *drungarius* [*drungar*] of his troops, and gave him a wife from the Arshakuni House, one of his relatives, and dispatched him to the army, to his troops. After this, [the emperor] sent T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik' back to Armenia with great honor, giving him the same authority of military command [as he held before]—whether or not the princes of Armenia wanted it. He came and was established in the same authority.

The next year, the Ishmaelite army came to Atrpatakan where it divided into three parts. One division went to Ayarat; another, to the *Sep'hakan Gund* area; and the third to Aghbania/Aghuania. Those who went to the *Sep'hakan Gund* area spread out raiding, putting all of those parts to the sword, and taking booty and captives. They came and assembled at [142] Erewan [The Abgaryan edition has Herewan. See Abgaryan, p.314 n. 512, where he speculates that the original text read *Her ew and*, and referred to the district of Her]. They battled with the fortress, but were unable to take it. They went to Ordspoy and were unable to take it. So they departed, encamping across from the fortress of Artsap', near the water. [The Arabs] began warring with the fortress, and suffered no small amount of injury from those inside. Now there was a [secret] way out of the fortress from the rear leading in the direction of Asoren. This [g116] was called Kaxanaktuts'. Now some men thus descended from the fortress, to go to request an auxiliary force from Darawn fortress. And Smbat Bagratuni gave them his son, Varaz Sahak, with forty men.

Going at nighttime, they ascended to the fortress, not taking care [to conceal] the place. The Ishmaelites found the place and entered the fortress by the very same path. Before dawn they had seized the place. They came across ten guards asleep, whom they killed.

Chapter 33.

The Lord frees the captives and destroys the Ishmaelites. Those [Arabs] who had spread out raiding at Ayarat strike Tayk', Iberia/Georgia, and Aghbania/Aghuania. The naval battle between the Ishmaelites and the Byzantines. Procopius [Prhokop] goes to Mu'awiya [Muawiya], prince of the Ishmaelites, [143] and the peace between [the Arabs] and Byzantines. The deeds of kat'oghikos Nerses. The dispute over faith with the Armenians. The Armenians' reply to emperor Constans.

In the second year of Constans' [reign], on a Sunday, the 23rd of the month of Horhi [Horhi: the second month of the moveable Armenian calandar], the Ishmaelites shrieked before and behind the fortress and put [the inhabitants] to the sword. Many were thrown from the height and were killed. After lowering the women and children from the fortress, they wanted to kill them. There was no counting the captives, and there were an extremely great number of cattle [which they seized]. But at dawn the next day the general of Armenia

came upon them and visited inconceivable destruction on them. Now they were 3,000 select armed men, drawn from all the Ishmaelite forces, but [virtually] none of them escaped. A few, however, fled on foot, and secured themselves in Shamp ["Swamp"]. On that day, the Lord spared the multitude of captives from the Ishmaelites, and greatly destroyed Ishmael. Two Ishmaelite princes, 'Uthman [Awt'man] and Ogomay [Abgaryan: *Ogbay*, p. 317 n. 523], died. Great was the triumph of the general of Armenia, and the latter sent to Constans gifts from the booty, one hundred of the most [144] select horses. The emperor and the entire palace were pleased, and [Constans] sent great thanks [to T'eodoros].

Now that [Arab] army which was in the Ayraratean region put to the sword areas as far as Tayk', Iberia, and Aghbania/Aghuania. They took booty and captives and passed on to Naxchawan where the other division was battling to take the fortress of Naxchawan. However, they were unable to take it. They took the fortress of Xram, killing [the men] and taking the women and children captive.

Now the [Arab general] who was in the Palestine area, ordered that a large naval fleet be organized. He boarded a ship and began warring with Constantinople. But his naval battle did not succeed, for a multitude of [Byzantine] troops in boats came up before him, and sent [the Arabs] to the deep, driving off many others with fire, and pursuing those who fled. Nonetheless, emperor Constans was horrified [by the attack] and considered it wise to pay a tax/tribute [*sak*], and to make peace by means of messengers. The Ishmaelites hurried the Byzantines to complete a peace agreement. Now [145] Constans, the Byzantine emperor, because he was a lad, did not dare to do so without the approval of the army. So he wrote to Procopius for him to go with him to Damascus, to see Mu'awiya, prince of the Ishmaelite army, in order to make the terms of the agreement in accordance with the desires of the troops. As soon as Procopius saw the imperial order and learned about matters from the troops, he went with them to Damascus to Mu'awiya, prince of the Ishmaelite army. He revealed the amount of the tribute, stated the limit, made peace, and departed.

At that time Nerses, *kat'oghikos* of Armenia, decided to build a dwelling for himself close by the holy churches in the city of Vagharshapat, by the road where it is said king Trdat went before saint Gregory. [Nerses] also built [g118] a church there named after the divine Zvart'nots' ["Joyous Ones"] the multitude of heavenly soldiers who appeared in the vision of saint Gregory. He built a lofty structure of stunning beauty worthy of the divine honor to which it was dedicated. [Nerses] led [the course of] a river [near to the church], he had all the stony areas worked on, and then planted vineyards and trees. To the glory of God, he ordered that a lofty wall be constructed, which by its [146] beautiful design blended with nature.

But that rebellious dragon did not cease and instead out of its cunning, wanted to war with God. It strove to bring persecution upon the churches of the land of the Armenians. For in the time of Heraclius' grandson, emperor Constans, it started working the guile of its wickedness taking as satellites those troops stationed on Byzantine [Armenian] land. Now the Armenians never accepted the Roman communion of the Body and Blood of the Lord. [The soldiers] wrote a letter of complaint to the Byzantine emperor Constans and to the patriarch, saying: "We are regarded as infidels in this land. For [the people here] are disrespectful toward Christ God's Council of Chalcedon and the Tome of Leo, and they anathematize them." Then the emperor and the patriarch ordered that an edict be written to the Armenians telling them to unite with the faith of the Romans and not to despise the Council or the Tome. Now there was [in Constantinople] a man named Dawit' from the village of Bagrawan who had studied the art of philosophy. [Constans] ordered that he be dispatched to Armenia to eliminate the opposition. All the bishops and *naxarars* of Armenia assembled in Dwin by the Christ-loving *kat'oghikos*, Nerses, and the pious general of Armenia, T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik'. They saw the emperor's [147] order, and listened to the philosopher who taught the division of the Trinity according to the Tome of Leo. Having heard this, they did not agree to replace the correct doctrine of saint Gregory with the Tome of Leo. All were inclined to [g119] give a written reply.

[The following is] a copy of the reply to the letter sent to Armenia by Constans, emperor of Rome, written by the bishops of Armenia, *kat'oghikos* Nerses, the *naxarars* and general T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik'.

A true and orthodox Nicean letter.

I beseech those of you who hold the God-loving Christian faith to read this.

We have the command of the caring prophets and apostles of Christ to make beseeching prayers for your God-loving realm, for all the princes, troops, and pious palace officials, wherein the love of God reposes and the signs of divine favor are apparent.

For behold, [you possess] a kingdom greater and stronger [148] than all others, which was crowned not by human hands but by the right hand of God, which nothing except Christ's kingdom can equal. By the grace of God the same is true of [your] patriarchate.

The *naxarars* and Christ-loving troops—and we glory in the light of your God-loving kingdom—were unmoved by the wicked and impious Iranian kings. For when they abolished the kingdom, and destroyed all the troops of the land of Armenia taking men and women into captivity, brandishing swords at the survivors and trying to convert [us] to fanaticism, they were unable to do so. Indeed, "the infidels were yet more embarrassed in their folly [Psalms 24]." [So matters continued] until king Kawad and his son Xosrov ordered that "each individual should adhere to his own faith and no one should dare harrass the Armenians. All are physically our servants, but as for spiritual matters, He Who judges souls knows about them." Then there was Ormazd's son Xosrov who [g120], after capturing Jerusalem, ordered all the bishops of the East and of Asorestan to assemble at Court. He said to them: "I hear that both sides are Christians yet that one group anathematizes the other. What do they regard as just? Now [149] let them come together at the royal court so that what is correct will be confirmed and what is false will be rejected." So all the bishops and priests and believers in those parts assembled, and [the king] established as their *ostikan* Smbat Bagratuni (who was called Xosrov Shnum), and the chief physician of the Court. Present were the patriarch Zak'aria of Jerusalem who was in captivity and many other philosophers who were captured from the city of Alexandria. King Xosrov ordered them to proceed with justice and to acquaint him with the truth.

All of them assembled in the royal hall, and there was a commotion. For some were of the orthodox faith, [possessing] documents with the seals of ancient kings. Others were Nestorians, while many others were the rabble. The patriarch even came forward and said: "Let that man not be called God," and the king was informed.

The king responded: "By whose command has he come here? Let him be beaten and have him depart." He also ordered that the multitude of sectarians be removed from the *atean*. He ordered that only the [beliefs of the] Niceans, Constantinopolitans, [150] Ephesians, and Chalcedonians should be examined. Now there were two bishops from the land of Armenia present, trustworthy men who had been dispatched [to Iran] because of the violence in the land [of Armenia]. [They were] Kumitas, bishop of the Mamikoneans, and Matt'eos, [bishop] of the Amatunik', and had arrived to inform the king. They had ready with them the document of saint Gregory. The king ordered that it be asked: "During the reigns of which kings did those councils take place?" And they replied: "The Nicean Council took place under Constantine; the Council of [g121] Constantinople, under Theodosius the Great; Ephesus, under Theodosius the Less; and Chalcedon, under Marcian." The king replied: "The orders of three kings seem more just than that of one king." Then the king started asking about Nestorius, wanting to know who he was, where he was from, at which council had he been present, and what he had said. Then he ordered that the Nestorians be removed from the *atean*. Similarly he inquired about the Council of Chalcedon, wanting to know who were its principals.

They told him everything, saying "[the heads of the councils of] Nicea and Constantinople were emperors Constantine and Theodosius the Great themselves. The Council of Ephesus was presided over by [151] Cyril, bishop of Alexandria and Chalcedon, by bishop Theodore who was inclined toward Nestorius."

Present [at this assembly] were [the cleric] called the Eran *kat'oghikos*, and other bishops from Asorestan, Aruastan, Xuzhastan, and other lands. King Xosrov ordered that if they did not turn from their heresies and walk the royal path, he would have all of their churches demolished, and have them put to the sword. He ordered that a tax be levied for the Chalcedonians, Iberians/Georgians, and the *kat'oghikos* of Aghbania/Aghuania and many other bishops from the Byzantine area, and the princes who had come into the service of the Iranian king [*? isk ork' zk'aghkedonin ew zVrats' .ew ishxank' `ork' ekeal ein i tsarhayut'iwn parsits' t'agaworin, orov ew ch'ep'ayk'arn isk hramayeats' tal*]. However, he sought a contract from the two sides. He started to examine the Council of Nicea (which was convened by Constantine): of Constantinople (under Theodosius the Great) of Ephesus (under Theodosius the Less) and of Chalcedon (under Marcian). When he was familiarized with everything justly and truthfully, he inquired: "Why is it that those three do not mention the division of [Christ's] [152] nature into two parts, as the others do? It is clear that even we must be divided in two, that [even] the king has two, rather than one, nature. For I, too, am of two natures, one from the father and one from the mother, one spiritual, one physical. However, the Divinity which is not everywhere [g122] despite what it wants, cannot be everything or do everything. What is Divinity?" Then [Xosrov] ordered that Zak'aria the patriarch of Jerusalem and the philosopher from the city of Alexandria be ordered to tell the truth under oath. They replied: "We did not approach God wickedly nor did he visit his anger upon us wickedly. Now, fearing God we shall speak the truth before you. The true faith is the one pronounced at Nicea before the venerable Constantine. [The councils of] Constantinople and Ephesus were in accord with this as is the correct faith of the Armenians. The pronouncements of Chalcedon were not in accord with them, as your benevolence has learned." The king ordered that the treasury be examined and they found [in the treasury a copy] of the true Nicean creed and the confession of faith of the land of Armenia which was sealed with the ring of king Kawad and of his son Xosrov. And this king Xosrov ordered that 'all Christians under my authority should hold the faith of the Armenians.' [153] Those uniting with the Armenians' faith were the metropolitan Kamyishov from Asorestan and ten other bishops, the God-loving queen Shirin, brave Smbat, and the great Chief Physician. King Xosrov ordered that a copy of the correct confession of faith be sealed with his ring and placed in the royal treasury.

"Now because God removed us from serving the authority of darkness and made us worthy of your divine kingdom how much more ought we to beseech Christ God that your pious and God-loving kingdom remain unshaken for eternity, that days on earth be as days in Heaven filled with much triumph, ruling the entire world, land and sea. For although physically you are of the [g123] human race, nonetheless you sit on a divine throne and your God-loving kingdom is filled with the light of glory which shines down upon all, you who are crowned from On High, the pride of all Christians, with the strength of the divine Cross. You resemble the God-loving, pious, God-favored, brave, triumphant, salvation-working, blessed Heraclius, your father, who saved all countries from the bitter executioner. May Christ God grant you the same because of your piety."

[There follows a lengthy discussion of doctrinal matters, which we omit. The translation resumes with chapter 34 *grabar* p. 135.]

Chapter 34.

The attack of the Hagarenes, and events in Rome.

Once again I shall speak about the evil which befell us in our time, regarding how the veil of ancient faith was torn, and how that death-bringing dry heat breathed upon us and scorched the tall, beautiful, leafy trees of our tender orchards. And this is the truth, for we sinned against the Lord and angered the saint of Israel. "Should it please you to heed me," he said, "you shall take the land's goodness. But should you wish not to listen, the sword shall devour you, for this was uttered by the mouth of the Lord." This same whirlwind was seen above Babylon and then reached every country. For Babylon is the mother of all nations and its realm, the kingdom of the North.

Now further south of them, namely, the Indians and the peoples dwelling in the great desert were the disowned sons of Abraham, born of Hagar and K'etura: Ishmael, Amram, Mogan, Madian, Yek'san, Yesbok, and Melisawe. And the sons of Lot were Amon and Movab; and those of Esau were Edom, and there were others yet, who dwelled to the north of the southern Indians in the enormous and vast desert, [being] disowned [155] by Moses and the children of Israel. The prophet said about them: "[They are] as a storm which comes moving from the south, from the terrible desert." That is the large and terrible desert [I mentioned], from which came that whirlwind of peoples, arising as a storm, and seizing and trampling every country. And the saying was fulfilled, that "the fourth beast will create a fourth kingdom upon the earth, more wicked than all other kingdoms, which will make a desert of every country" [g135].

Now what shall I say about the agitation and calamitous disasters taking place within the empire of the Romans, [the empire] which never ceased its internecine warfare? The principal men and advisors of the realm were drowned in blood, since it is said, they were plotting the emperor's death. As a result, all the principal men and the princes of the empire were destroyed and the inhabitants of the land were reduced, until there was no advisor to be found. [Among those] killed were Georg Magistros and that virtuous man, Manuel, who was the father-in-law of *aspet* Smbat (son of Smbat the great, called Xosrov Shum). Some say that they observed a glowing light at the place where he was killed. Smbat was exiled. For the troops accused him of trying to rebel afterwards. They told the emperor that [Smbat had said] "The [156] Magistros' blood must be avenged." He was a prince of the army there, and liked by all the troops. Smbat was prince of the Thracian princes' troops, while Manuel was a Magistros working in Constantinople. Now the emperor did not summon the Magistros with bold authority, since he feared a rebellion of the troops. Rather, he summoned the *aspet* Smbat and made him swear by the Lord's Cross, which he possessed, that he would divulge nothing. Then the emperor sent [Smbat] back to his troops to speak to the Magistros in peace, but to deceive him and bring him [into captivity]. Now [Smbat] went but was unable to deceive him, especially since he did not conceal [the emperor's] words. Then he spoke with all the princes of the army and gave [the Magistros] the imperial order. Since they and all the troops were unable to resist the imperial order, they gave him into their hands. They seized and bound him and took him into the emperor's presence. As a result, the troops of the Thracian princes plotted [Smbat's] death and said that he was planning to rebel, so that he would be put to death. However, the emperor rejected them and spared [Smbat] [g136].

Chapter 35.

The Ishmaelites war with the Iranians and destroy their lordship. The death of Yazkert. The Medes and the Armenians enter the service of the Hagarenes. Constans comes to Armenia. The Ishmaelites prepare [to fight] with the Byzantines. Regarding Nerses, kat'oghikos of Armenia.

In the twentieth year of king Yazkert of Iran [A.D. 652], in the eleventh year of emperor Constans (who was called Constantine after his father), in the nineteenth year of the lordship of the Ishmaelites, the Ishmaelite army which was in the country of Iran and Xuzhastan went eastward to the area known as the Palhaw country (which is the land of the Parthians) against Yazkert, king of Iran. Yazkert fled from them, but was unable to escape, because [the Arabs] caught up with him close to the Kushans' borders, and destroyed all of his troops. [Yazkert] fled to the army of the T'etals who had come from different areas to help him. Then there was the Marats' prince, about whom I spoke earlier. He had gone to the east to their king, rebelled, fortifying himself in one place, requested an oath from the Ishmaelites, and went to the desert to serve the Ishmaelites. Now the T'etal troops seized Yazkert and killed him. He had reigned for twenty years. And so ended the lordship of the Iranians and [158] the House of Sasan, which had ruled for 642 years.

When the king of the Ishmaelites saw the success of these victories, and that he had done away with the kingdom of Iran, [he became confident], and when three years of the peace provision had passed, [the Arab caliph] no longer wanted to continue the peace with the Byzantine emperor. So he ordered his troops to commence warfare on land and sea, to do away with this kingdom as well, in the twelfth year of the reign of Constans [g137].

In the same year the Armenians rebelled, withdrawing from the Byzantine empire, and entering the service of the Ishmaelite king. T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik' and all the princes of Armenia made an oath until death, and an agreement [lasting] until the grave to break the divine harmony [between Armenia and Byzantium]. The Ishmaelite prince spoke with them as follows: "Let this be an oath of peace between myself and you [lasting] as many years as you wish. I shall not take tribute [*sak*] from you for three years after which, by oath, you may pay what you wish. You may keep 15,000 cavalry in your land. Provide sustenance from your land and I shall include it in the royal tax. I shall [159] not demand that the [Armenian] cavalry be sent to Syria though let it be ready to go and fight wherever else I order it. I shall send no emirs to [your] fortresses, nor even a single Arab officer or cavalryman. Let no enemy enter Armenia, but should the Byzantines come against you, I shall dispatch as large an auxiliary force as you want. And I swear by God the Great that I shall not break this vow." Thus did the satellite of the anti-Christ pull [the Armenians] away from the Byzantines [This section, unlike the major portion of the book uses *hrhomots*' (Romans) instead of *yunats*' (Greeks) for the Byzantine empire.]. For although the emperor wrote them many requests and entreaties and summoned them, they did not want to listen to him. Then [the emperor] said: "I shall come to the city of Karin and you should come to me. For I want to give you stipends in aid and plan together with you what we should do." Despite this [the Armenians] did not want to heed him.

All the Byzantine troops complained and grumbled about the lord of Rshtunik' and about the Armenians before their emperor about the blows [inflicted] at Mardots'ek'. They said: "[The Armenians] have allied with the Ishmaelites. They made us trust them, encouraged the troops to go raiding to Atrpatakan, then had [the Arabs] attack us unexpectedly [160] and defeat us. We left everything there. Now let us go to Armenia and get our things."

Then emperor Constans agreed to do the will of the troops. He took 100,000 of his troops and went to Armenia. As soon as he reached Derchan, Ishmaelites came before him [g138] and gave him a letter from their prince which said: "Armenia is mine, so do not go there. But should you go, I will deal with you in such a way that you will be unable to flee." Now emperor Constans said: "That land belongs to me, and I shall go there. Should you come against me, God will be the judge of what is just." And he went to the city of Karin in the twelfth year of his reign and in the twentieth year of the lordship of the Ishmaelites.

The emperor Constans spent several days in the city of Karin/Erzerum. The princes and troops from so-called Fourth Armenia came before him, as did all the troops and princes from that area who had separated from [the followers of] Rshtunik'. [Among them] were the Sperats'ik', the Bagratid princes, the Managhayk', the Daranaghayk', those from the district of Ekegheats', all the troops from those places, and the Karnats'ik', Tayets'ik' and Basenats'ik'. Also coming into [Constans'] presence there were the princes of Vanand with their troops, [161] the Shirakats'ik', Xorxorhuni, men from the House of Dimak'sen; Mushegh Mamikonean with his people, certain other princes, troops from the Ayrarat area, the Arhawegheank', Arhaneank' Varazhnunik', Gnt'unik', Spandunik' and others. *Kat'oghikos* Nerses had come from Tayk' and visited [the emperor]. All the princes told the emperor about the plan and desire of rebellion of the lord of Rshtunik' and about the quick traffic of Ishmaelite emissaries going to see him. Then the emperor and all of his troops anathematized the lord of Rhshtunik', removed him from the dignity of authority and dispatched another man in his place accompanied by forty men. When they reached [T'eodoros] he had them seized and bound, sending some to the fortress of Baghesh and others to the islands in [Lake] Bznunik' [Lake Van]. Then he himself went to the island of Aght'amar commanding the troops of those areas to go and secure themselves in their own districts. United with him were the Iberians/Georgians, Aghbanians/Aghuanians and Siwnets'ik' who, in accordance with his order, went to their own lands and fortified themselves there. Now T'eodoros, lord of Vahewunik', seized Arp'a fortress. His son, Grigor, was the son-in-law of the lord of Rshtunik' [g139]. Varaz Nerseh Dashtkari secured himself out in the open and seized the treasury, since all the treasures [162] of the land, the Church, the princes, and merchants were there.

Now as soon as emperor Constans heard about this, he wanted to loot the multitude of the troops and to go and winter in Armenia, in order to destroy the country. But then the *kat'oghikos* Mushegh and all the princes prostrated themselves and with great and tearful entreaties asked for clemency so that [Constans] not become totally enraged because of their offenses and destroy the country. The emperor heeded their requests and released the multitude of troops. Then he himself went to Ayrarat with 20,000 troops and to Dwin where he resided in the home of the *kat'oghikos*. The emperor made Mushegh lord of the Mamikoneans, prince of the Armenian cavalry and dispatched him with 3,000 men to the area of the *sep'hakan gund*. Likewise, he sent some of his troops to Iberia, Aghbania, and Siwnik' to destroy their alliance. Other troops invested the area around the emperor, in the mountains and plains. While for some time they did not want to submit, later on they did go into [imperial] service. However, [those] in Aghbania, Siwnik', and the *sep'hakan gund* [area] did not submit. [Imperial troops] looted their country, taking whatever they found, and then returning to the king.

[163]

Regarding the Armenian *kat'oghikos* Nerses.

Now I shall relate a few things about Armenia's *kat'oghikos* Nerses. He was originally from the village of Ishxan in Tayk'. From childhood he was raised on Byzantine land, had learned the language of the Romans, and circulated about the land as a member of the military. He had accepted the Council of Chalcedon and the Tome of Leo. He did not reveal [g140] his plans of impiety to anyone until he reached [the office of] the episcopacy of the land. Subsequently he was called to the *kat'oghikosal* throne. He was a man of virtuous behavior, of fasts and prayers. But within his heart was concealed the poison of bitterness: he planned to make the Armenians accept the Council of Chalcedon, but did not dare to do anything about it until emperor

Constans came and stayed at the home of the *kat'oghikos* and on Sunday preached the Council of Chalcedon in the church of saint Gregory. The mass was offered in Latin by a Roman priest, and the emperor, the *kat'oghikos*, and all the bishops took communion—those who wanted to and those who did not. Thus did the *kat'oghikos* shake the true faith of saint Gregory which all [previous] *kat'oghikoi* had held firmly in the holy Church, from [the time of] [164] saint Gregory to this day. And [Nerses] fouled the limpid, clear waters of the fountains [a plan] which he had in mind for a long time, but which he dared not to reveal until that day. But when the time was right, he worked his will, betraying the bishops one by one, and disheartening them with terror. [He threatened them] to the point that all of them carried out the command to commune under fear of death. [They communed] even more so because [their mentors], the venerable and most fundamental [bishops] had died. But a certain bishop silenced and countered the emperor in his presence. Earlier all the bishops had subscribed with him and he had cursed the Council of Chalcedon and the Tome of Leo and rejected communion with Byzantium. This was sealed with the ring of the *kat'oghikos*, and the rings of all the bishops and grandee princes. They gave it to him to keep in the church. Now when mass was offered and all the bishops communed, the bishop whom I mentioned earlier, did not commune. Rather he descended from the *bema* and was hidden in the crowd.

As soon as the ceremony of communion was finished, and the emperor entered [his] room, the *kat'oghikos* and the Byzantine priest betrayed [the bishop] and made a complaint about him, saying: "He did not sit on [his] throne and did [165] not commune with us, regarding us and you unworthy. He left the *bema* and concealed himself in the crowd." The [g141] emperor became angry and ordered two men to go seize him and bring him to him in the room. [When this was done] the emperor asked: "Are you a priest?" The bishop replied: "If God and your glory so will it." The emperor said: "And who are you that you regard neither me, your king, nor your *kat'oghikos* and our father as worthy of communing with you?" The bishop replied: "I am a sinful, worthless man, and unworthy of communing with you; however, should God make me worthy of [communings with] you I would consider that I enjoyed [communion] with Christ at [His] Table and from His Hands." The emperor retorted: "Enough of that. Now tell me, is that the *kat'oghikos* of Armenia, or not?" The bishop answered: "Indeed, just as saint Gregory was." The emperor asked: "Do you have that [respect] for the *kat'oghikos*?" "Yes," he said. "Will you take communion with him?" [The bishop answered:] "Just as with saint Gregory." The emperor asked: "Then why is it that you did not commune today?" The bishop replied: "Benevolent king, when we had but seen your image painted on the wall we were seized with trembling. Behold [how much more frightening it is] now, to see you face to face and to speak with you directly. We are ignorant benighted people who know [166] neither [your] language nor [your] literature. But if we study first, we shall then master it. May your benevolent command rule by healing. He [the *kat'oghikos*] has gone beyond all the [religious] commands of this land. Four years ago he convened an assembly and all the bishops assembled here. He had a document regarding the faith made. Then he, I, and all the princes sealed this with our rings. That document is now with him. Order that it be sought and examined." And he was silent. The emperor realized his treachery and reprimanded him a great deal in his own language. The emperor then ordered [the bishop] to go and commune with the *kat'oghikos*. As soon as the bishop fulfilled the emperor's order, he said: "May God bless your benevolent and pious rule forever, and may you rule over all the seas and lands with much triumph". The emperor likewise blessed the bishop [g142], saying: "May God bless you. You did what befits your wisdom, and I am thankful."

The emperor hastened to Constantinople with great urgency, to reach it quickly. He departed in haste. He made a certain Morianos the prince of Armenia [and gave him] [167] an Armenian force which was from the area.

Now when emperor Constans left Dwin, the *kat'oghikos* went with him. [The *kat'oghikos*] went and stopped in Tayk' and did not return to his place, for the prince of Rshtunik' and the other princes with him directed incredible rage at him. Now T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik', and his son-in-law, Hamazasp, lord of the Mamikoneans, were lying in ambush at the island of Aght'amar. He requested troops from the Ishmaelites and

7,000 men came to his aid. He stationed them at Aghiovit and Bznunik', then he came and remained with them.

When winter had passed and it was close to great Easter, the Byzantines fled and went to Tayk', but were expelled. They were unable to station themselves anywhere, but rather fled to the shores of the [Black] sea, destroying the entire country. They captured the city of Trapizon amassing a great deal of loot, booty, and captives.

After this, T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik', went to the Ishmaelite prince Mu'awiya in Damascus and saw him with very great gifts. And the Ishmaelite prince gave him clothing made with gold and silver threads and a veil [or: banner], after their fashion. [Mu'awiya] gave [T'eodoros] authority over Armenia, [168] Iberia, Aghbania/Aghuania, Siwnik', as far as Kapkoh and the Chora Gate, and released him with honor. [Mu'awiya] stipulated that he should bring that country into service. The breaking of the peace which had existed between Constans and Mu'awiya the Ishmaelite prince, took place in the eleventh year of Constans' reign. The king of the Ishmaelites ordered that all his troops should assemble in the West and make war on the Byzantine empire, to take Constantinople and to eliminate yet another kingdom [g143].

Chapter 36.

The letter of the Ishmaelite king to the Byzantine emperor Constans. The Ishmaelite prince Mu'awiya comes to Chalcedon and is vanquished by the Lord.

"If you want to spend your life in peace," he wrote, "abandon that foolish faith which you learned from childhood. Deny that Jesus and turn to the great God whom I worship, the God of our father Abraham.

"Send the multitude of your troops away from you, back to their own places. I shall make you a great prince in that region. I shall send *ostikans* to your city, examine all the treasures, and order them divided into four parts. [169] Three parts will go to me, one part to you. I will give you as many troops as you need, and take as tribute as much as you are able to give. Otherwise, how can that Jesus whom you call Christ—who was unable to save himself from the Jews—possibly save you from me?"

All the troops in the east, in Iran, and Xuzhastan, in the Indian area, from Aruastan and Egypt assembled by Mu'awiya, prince of the army, who resided in Damascus. They readied military vessels at Alexandria and all the coastal cities and filled the boats with soldiers and [war] machinery. They had three hundred very large vessels with 1,000 very select cavalymen in each boat. [Mu'awiya] also ordered that 5,000 light boats be made. Because of their light weight, he placed few men in them, 100 men per ship, so that they swiftly glide over the waves of the sea surrounding the very large boats. Then [Mu'awiya] dispatched them across the sea. He took the troops which were with him and went to Chalcedon. As he approached, all the inhabitants of every land submitted to him, the shore-dwellers, mountain-dwellers, and plains-dwellers. Now the multitude of the [g144] Byzantine troops went and entered Constantinople to guard the city. Meanwhile the corrupter [Mu'awiya] entered Chalcedon in the 13th year of Constans. At the shore he had organized many light ships so that when the heavier boats reached Chalcedon he would quickly go to their aid. [The Arabs] [170] had a letter from their king taken to Constans in the city.

The emperor took the letter and entered the House of God. He prostrated himself and said:

"See, Lord, how these Hagarenes insult You. Have mercy upon us, Lord, as we place our hopes in You. Shower them with contempt and avenge Your Name, Lord. Let them be kept in embarrassed confusion forever and be destroyed in shame. Let them learn that Your Name is Lord and You alone are high above every country."

[Constans] removed his crown and his purple robes and donned a hair shirt. He sat upon ashes and ordered that a fast be proclaimed in Constantinople after the fashion of Nineveh.

Then behold, the large ships arrived at Chalcedon from the Alexandria area together with all the small ships and all their equipment. For they had equipped the boats with engines of war, shooting machines, rock-hurling machines, archers and slingers. [They were designed] so that when they reached the city wall they would easily be able to go over the wall into the city, from the summits of the towers. When [the Arabs] were about two *asparez* distant from land, the dreadful power of the Lord was revealed. For the Lord [171] made a sign and caused a violent wind to blow from Heaven. The wind arose, [turned into] a great storm, stirred the sea from the depths and rose to the surface creating waves as tall as the crests of lofty mountains. The wind which howled at them crashed and thundered like a storm cloud. The abyss gurgled and the towers fell, the machinery was destroyed, the ships were demolished, and the multitude of [g145] troops sank into the depths of the sea. The survivors were dispersed on planks, and, tossed about by the rising and falling of the waves, were killed. For the sea opened its mouth and swallowed them, and not a single one survived. That day, God with His arm raised, spared the city because of the prayers of the pious emperor Constantine. The violence of the wind and the churning of the sea did not end for six days.

When the Ishmaelites saw the dreadful power of the Lord, their hearts broke. Quitting Chalcedon at night, they returned to their own place. The other army which was stationed in the Cappadocia area made war on the Byzantine troops. The Byzantines struck them and they fled to Aruastan, subjecting Fourth Armenia to looting. When fall had passed and winter was near, the Ishmaelite army came and [172] encamped at Dwin. It planned to go and put Iberia/Georgia to the sword. [The Ishmaelite commander] communicated [with Iberia] by means of a threatening message which said: "Either you enter our service, or you leave the country and depart." But [the Iberians] did not accept this. Rather, they prepared to resist them in war. The Ishmaelites went against them to make war and to extirpate them completely.

Now when they were on the road, cold and the snow of winter fell on them. As a result, they hastily departed for Asorestan, and did not work injustice in Armenia.

Then the princes of Armenia who were in the Byzantine and the Arab sections, Hamazasp and Mushegh and all the others, came together in one place and united, making peace with each other so that the sword and bloodshed not appear in their midst, so that they pass the winter in peace, and spare the *shinakans* [peasants]. For the lord of Rshtunik' had fallen ill and had gone to the island of Aght'amar, and was unable to go out or to think of anything. [The princes] divided [g146] the country on the basis of the number of cavalrymen each [prince had], and established taxes in gold and silver.

One could observe there the misfortunes of doubt similar [173] to the [reactions] of a sick person when the pain grows severe and he cannot speak. Such things occurred. For there was nowhere for a man to flee to and hide, nor was he protected from within. Rather, he resembled someone who had fallen into the sea and was unable to find a way out.

Now when the lord of Rshtunik' saw this, he requested troops from the Ishmaelites to strike and persecute Armenia and to put Iberia to the sword.

Chapter 37.

The Medes rebell from the Ishmaelites.

In that year the Medes rebelled from Ishmaelite service and killed the Ishmaelite king's prince [in charge] of taxation. They took refuge in the strongholds of the land of Medes, the deep forests, the chasms, rocky places, the troublesome deep valleys which are by the Gaz river and Marats' mountain; and [they took refuge] in the might of the vigorous and brave peoples dwelling in them, Deln and Delumn [Abgaryan, p. 360 n.653 emends this to *Geghn* and *Delamn* and takes it as a reference to the peoples of Gilan and Daylam, by the southern shores of the Caspian Sea.].

[174] For they were unable to bear the bitter and harsh service and the weight of the tax which had been imposed on them. Each year 365 sacks of money were taken from them. From those who could not pay they took a man for each *dram* and eliminated the cavalry and the principality of the land. For such reasons they placed their lives in the balance and one out of two thought it better either to die, or to be freed from that wicked service. They started [g147] to assemble the remaining people into an army and to organize by brigades so that perhaps they might escape the dragon's teeth and the bitter breath of the beast.

Now the multitude of the Ishmaelite troops saw that their work was not succeeding in the region of the secure Marats' mountains. For they had not even been able to subjugate the Ket'rus and Skiwt'eay with all the multitude [staying] in secure places. Many [Arabs] lost their lives at the strongholds, falling headlong into the deep valleys. Many were pierced by arrows in the rough thorn patches, [arrows] shot by brave, manly warriors. [The Arabs] fled the place heading north toward the people who dwell by the Caspian Gates. They reached the Chora pass, crossed it, and destroyed all parts of the land by the foot of the mountain. A small force resisted them [175] [at a place] called the Gate of the Huns and struck at them, for they were the defenders of the place.

Another army arrived from the T'etal area and the two armies clashed with great violence. The Ishmaelite army was defeated by the T'etal army which struck at them and put them to the sword. Now the survivors were not able to flee through the pass since another T'etal army had come to assist the first army. So [the Arabs] headed for the great and rugged mount Caucasus. Barely going over a side of the mountain, a few [Arabs] escaped by a hairbreadth, naked, barefoot, on foot, and wounded. Thus did they go to the Ctesiphon area, to the country of their habitation [g148].

Chapter 38.

Mushegh rebels from the Byzantines and enters the Ishmaelites' service. The battle of the Ishmaelites with the Byzantines at Naxchawan, the destruction of the Byzantines and the destruction of Armenia. Once more the Armenians quit Ishmaelite service and submit to the Byzantines. Hamazasp, lord of the Mamikonean, becomes Curopalate, as a result of which the Ishmaelites kill the hostages. Discord breaks out among the Ishmaelite army and they separate from each other. Their prince Mu'awiya conquers all of them, becomes king, and makes peace among them.

Now Mushegh, lord of the Mamikoneans, rebelled in the [176] Byzantine area and entered Ishmaelite service. And in that same year the Ishmaelite army which was in the land of Armenia seized the entire country from end to end. T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik', and all the princes of the land united and entered [Arab] service, hastening to do their bidding in every way, for fear of a terrible death hung over them.

In that year the venerable and pious man Artawazd Dimaksean was betrayed by a jealous brother and delivered up to the merciless executioner named general Habib, who resided at Ashnak, Aruch. He put [Artawazd] to a very cruel death.

Now it was extremely cold winter and the Byzantines were harassing them. But because of the cold, [the Arabs] were unable to engage them in war. Instead, they arose unexpectedly, crossed the river, and went and fortified themselves at Zarehawan. When the Byzantines saw this, they did not concern themselves about them, but rather destroyed the fortress of Dwin, went to Naxchawan and fought with the fortress so that they might destroy it too. The general of the Byzantine army was a certain Mawrianos who was said to be a trustworthy man.

[177] When spring arrived, [the army] was organized and readied to war with the Ishmaelite army. But Mawrianos, becoming stubborn, thought that he himself would accomplish the work. The Arabs campaigned against the Byzantines who [g149] were fighting with the fortress of Naxchawan. They struck and put them to the sword and put the survivors to flight. Mawrianos fled to Iberia. The Ishmaelite army turned back and besieged the city of Karin, battling with it. Since [the inhabitants] were unable to resist them in war, they opened the city gates and submitted. [The Arabs] entered the city, gathered up the gold, silver and entire multitude of the city's goods, robbed the entire country of Armenia, Aghbania/Aghuania, and Siwnik', and denuded all the churches. As hostages they took the chief princes of the land, their women, and many sons and daughters.

T'eodoros, lord of the Rshtunik', and his relatives went along with them and took them to Asorestan. T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik', died there. His body was brought to his own district, and he was buried in the tomb of his fathers.

Hamazasp, lord of the Mamikoneans, son of Dawit', held authority in the land of Armenia. He was a man regarded as [178] virtuous by everyone. But he was delicate, a reader and a scholar, not—like his patrimonial family—skilled and adept at military exercises. He did not enter battle and did not see the enemy's face. But he began to strive for the bravery native to his ancestral House, fervently striving to accomplish an act of bravery as was the wont of his ancestors. He entreated Heaven to give leadership and triumph to him and to make him brave.

As I said earlier, Nerses, the *kat'oghikos* of Armenia, departed with the emperor and went with him to Constantinople. He was received there with honor. They gave him goods and released him to his place. He went and remained in Tayk' until the lord of Rshtunik' died and the Arab raids stopped. After six years of persecution, he returned to his place and was established on the throne of the *kat'oghikosate* [g150]. He hastened to complete the construction of the church which he had built on the avenue of the city of Vagharshapat.

I have futilely strung together words into a history, following the uninspired counsel of my own mind, and not the worthy blessing of knowledge. But I did examine the order of scholars and confirmed [my account] with the words of the prophets uttered at the command of the Lord. For although [179] the former is quickly fulfilled, the latter is fulfilled for eternity as the Lord said: "Heaven and earth may pass, but My words will not pass" [Matthew 24. 35]. "For from My anger fire will be roused, will burn, and descend to the depths of hell" [Jeremiah 15. 14]. What [the Lord] said about these people is clear: "They will be burned with fire, and the bases of their mountains will be disturbed"; speaking about the tyranny of the grandee princes: "I shall

pour out all types of evil upon them, and exhaust them with my arrows." For just as arrows fly from the well-curved bow of a strong man toward the target, so do [the Arabs] who come from the Sinai desert to destroy the entire world with hunger, the sword, and great terror. The fact that the fire blazed out in the desert area was clearly indicated [by the Lord] when He said: "I shall set incurable snares upon them, the beasts of the desert who will drag [their prey] here and there across the earth." As the prophet Daniel thundered: "The fourth beast is frightful and awesome and very strong. Its teeth are iron, its claws are copper; it eats then spits out and stomps on the food" [Daniel 7. 7] and so forth. The final words are: "The day of [180] their destruction is at hand, and the Lord has come upon them in His preparation" [Jeremiah 46. 21]. This too will be fulfilled in its own time.

That same year the Armenians stopped serving the Ishmaelites and submitted to the Byzantines. Emperor Constans made Hamazasp, lord of the Mamikoneans, Curopalate, giving [g151] him a silver throne and authority over the land of Armenia. He gave honors to the other princes and treasures to the troops.

When the king of the Ishmaelites saw that the Armenians had withdrawn from him, he had all of the hostages who had been taken from the country—some 1775 souls—put to the sword. Some twenty two [hostages] who were not in the place were the sole survivors.

Now Mushegh, lord of the Mamikoneans, was unable to quit Ishmaelite service because four of his sons were hostages kept by them. The three sons of Hamazasp and one brother were hostages. However, they sought him and other princes together with their women, to bring them to Syria. For this reason [the princes] preferred death to life, withdrew from [181] [Arab] service and, using speedy travel, submitted to the Byzantine emperor. United with them were the princes and troops of Aghbania/Aghuania and the princes of Siwnik' together with their land. Previously they had been attached to the geographical unit of Atrpatakan [*yashxaragirn Atrpatakani* "to the census of Atrpatakan"] until the Iranian kingdom was ended. When the Ishmaelites ruled, they were conquered and united with Armenia. [The Arabs] arrested Mushegh and the other princes who were with him.

The [Arab] king ordered that the other princes who had been arrested should be set free; however, he demanded that Mushegh remain with him.

Then God sent discord into the army of the sons of Ishmael. Their unity dissolved, they clashed with each other and divided into four parts. One part was in the Indian area. Another was that army which held Asorestan and the northern areas. Another was the one in Egypt and in the T'etal region. Another was in the Tachik area and at the place called Askarawn. They began fighting with each other and destroyed each other with endless killings. Now the troops who were in Egypt united with those in the [182] Tachik area and they killed their king and took the multitude of treasures as loot [g152]. They enthroned another king and returned to their places.

Now when their prince Mu'awiya, who was in Asorestan and was second to their king, saw what had happened, he united his troops and he too went to the desert. He killed the king whom they enthroned, battling with and severely destroying the troops in the Tachik area. He then returned to Asorestan in triumph. Now the army which was in Egypt united with the Byzantine emperor, made peace and was incorporated. The multitude of the troops, some 15,000 people, believed in Christ and were baptized. But the bloodshed of countless multitudes increased and intensified among the Ishmaelite armies. They engaged in frantic battles and killed each other. Nor were they able to stop even somewhat from wielding swords, taking captives and intense battles on land and sea, until Mu'awiya grew strong and conquered all of them. He subdued them, ruled as king over the property of the sons of Ishmael and made peace with everyone [g153].

Amen